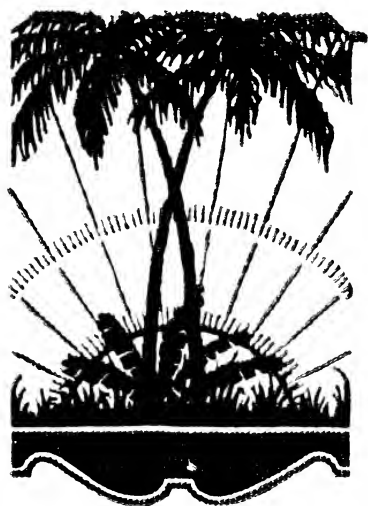


MASTER MISSIONARY SERIES

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MACKAY  
*OF* UGANDA  
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MACKAY OF UGANDA  
THE MISSIONARY ENGINEER

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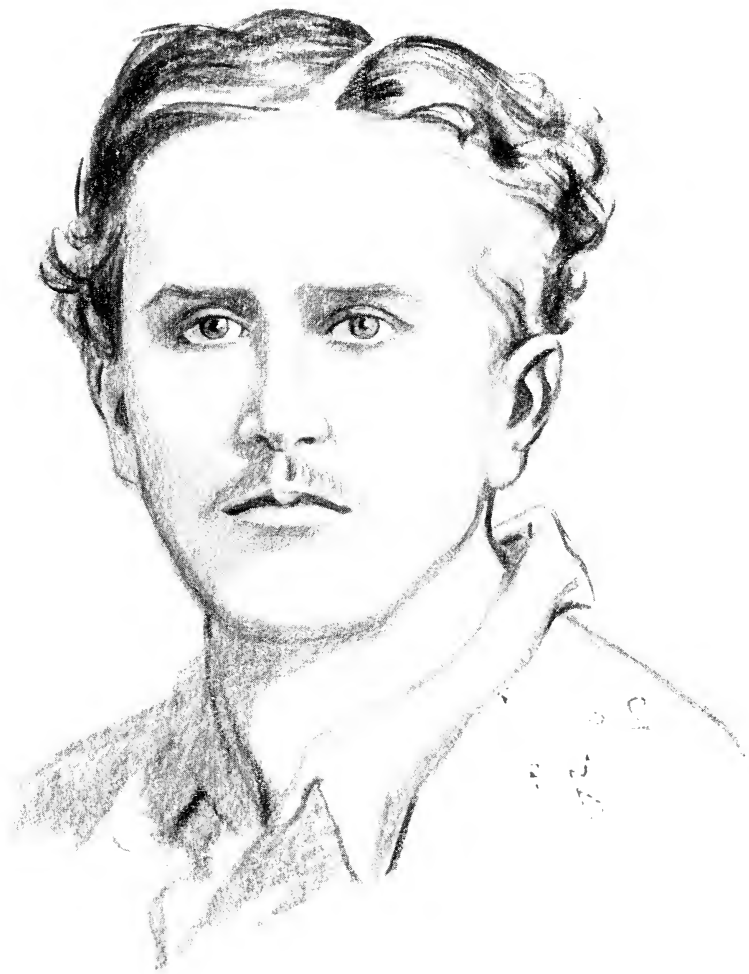
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MACKAY OF UGANDA

# MACKAY OF UGANDA

THE MISSIONARY ENGINEER

BY

MARY YULE



NEW YORK  
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

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## NOTE

THIS is practically a fresh life of Alexander Mackay, as it is based largely on new material. Grateful acknowledgment is made of the kindness of the daughters of the late Lieut.-Col. John Robb, I.M.S., who placed at the disposal of the author letters, hitherto unpublished, written by Mackay to their father between 1876 and 1887. These reveal Mackay in a most interesting light, and add to the high estimate the world has formed of his character.

When he was little more than an infant, a new church was being built in his native village. The masons used to allow him to handle their tools, and make him believe he was helping. ' Weel, laddie, ga'en to gie 's a sermon the day ? ' was the question

put to him one day. 'Please give me trowel,' he answered, 'can build and preach same time.' The present sketch will show how that early attitude was maintained throughout his life; and how in the heart of savage Africa, in the face of unparalleled difficulties, the missionary engineer presented an example of fearless courage, nobility of mind, and unfaltering faith.

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## MAP

MAP OF EAST AFRICA SHOWING ROUTE OF A. M.  
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NYANZA.

The Publishers express their thanks to  
the Church Missionary Society for their  
kindness in allowing them to reproduce  
illustrations and map from their works.



PART ONE  
A SON OF ABERDEENSHIRE



# I

## CHILDHOOD

ALEXANDER MACKAY was born at Rhynie, Aberdeenshire, on 13th October 1849. His father, for many years a prominent figure in the village, was Free Church minister there, and both throughout the countryside and farther afield was regarded as a man of learning and stern uprightness. The memory of Mrs. Mackay, still cherished amongst some of the older people, is a living embodiment of the Prudence, Piety, and Charity of Bunyan's 'House Beautiful.'

In the manse was another individual who was about as well known in the village as Mrs. Mackay. She went by the name of 'The Minister's Annie.' If the children of the parish were brought up to look upon their minister with a respect that held

## MACKAY OF UGANDA

something of awe—the little girls certainly felt that when they curtsied to him—Annie's respect had no fear in it ; hers was based on understanding. She had been housekeeper to the minister in his bachelor days, and vowed that if ever he brought home a wife she would ' quit the hoose.' She kept her word, but was soon back.

If Annie had never been ' bonnie,' she was certainly good and true. The interests of her master and mistress were hers, and although it is not related that she ever said so exactly, she learned to love the little lady who became Alexander Mackay's mother. Annie had no such word as *love* in her vocabulary. She spoke of it as ' a great regaird.'

It was the 13th of October when Alec came, but that morning there was a covering of snow upon the ' Tap o' Noth,' and the wind whistled round about, and through the house. ' Sic a day, sir !' Annie said to her master, as she showed him his little son for the first time. ' It's

awfu' unlucky to come on sic a day. He 'll hae the win' in his teeth a' his life.'

Alec was never sent to school in the village—his father took his education in hand—but even from babyhood he seemed to know everybody, and everybody knew him. There were two persons in the village who became special friends—Soutar the carpenter, and Lobban the smith, and he grew to like Annie better every day. She was one of those, he thought, who knew everything about you, and yet liked you all the time. Alec never had holidays like those he spent when Annie was commissioned to take him to spend a few days at the home of great friends. They lived at a farm 'far up the glen,' at the foot of the Buck o' the Cabrach. It was a wild, lonely road the two had to take, but Annie was stalwart and pegged on with long strides, while the wee kilted laddie trotted at her side or ran hither and thither, eager to examine everything that was strange and new to him. He was happy.

Was he not going to a place where he would be allowed to put his hand to regular farm work, just like a man ?

But when he got back to Rhynie, every morning he had to be ready for his lessons as soon as breakfast was over. No boy ever had a more thorough teacher. Mr. Mackay did not believe in giving Alec much to commit to memory ; he taught him rather to use his reasoning powers, especially in reading. At seven years of age his daily reading lesson was the leading article in the newspaper—probably the *Edinburgh Daily Review*—his father explaining it to him paragraph by paragraph ; at the same time he started to ground him in classics and mathematics.

It was natural that the premature development of intelligence made the child's talk pathetically amusing to such friends as Soutar and Lobban, but it pleased the father to think that his boy was already able to discuss matters almost like a man. He kept teaching him con-



stantly. The humming of bees on a summer day would suggest a lesson on insects ; the dew, the hoar-frost—subjects were never wanting.

The villagers were interested in the movements of the couple. They often saw them stop as if to examine something on the ground. What could it be ? Mr. Mackay was giving a lesson in geography with his walking-stick, mayhap tracing the course of some great river ; or he was demonstrating a problem in Euclid. Alec enjoyed himself best when they went on an excursion to a neighbouring sandstone quarry. They were armed with real geological hammers, and he was allowed to use them. The quarry-men would occasionally let him feel the weight of the hammers they used, and then ask him to try to break a stone with one of them. That was rare fun !

## II

### HE WEIGHS MATTERS

MUCH of the knowledge that Alec was acquiring served to send his thoughts in a very different direction from what the father intended.

‘What books shall I bring you from Edinburgh?’ he asked Alec, as he was driving the four miles to Gartly Station in order to catch the train for Aberdeen. Although Alec was but nine years of age he was expected to take the ‘machine’ home.

A request for a printing-press came as a shock.

‘A printing-press! What do you mean by a printing-press?’ And Mr. Mackay told Alec how the very last time he had been at the Manse of Keig he had seen one of Mr. Smith’s sons lying on the floor poring over a Hebrew Bible. ‘And you

want to waste your time over a printing-press ! I had hoped to see you a preacher of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ.'

' I have no inclination that way,' Alec answered, ' and, Father, I must tell you I have a growing distaste for the ministry. I am interested in machinery and I want to be an engineer. It is your own teaching that has biassed my mind in that direction.'

In the train the father pondered over things. ' What could have put a printing-press into the boy's head ? I expect it was the part it played in furthering the Reformation. I know he has been reading d'Aubigné. He loves books, and yet hankers after all sorts of crafts. He is off to the smithy or the carpenter's shop whenever he has a spare half-hour, and I know that they encourage him to lend a helping hand. He must be removed from his surroundings. Meantime, I'll search for an interesting book for him.'

Mr. Mackay could not find the sort of book he wanted, but Alec was made very

proud and happy by the present of a small printing-press, and the promise that an assortment of type would be sent later by Messrs. Blackwood, the famous Edinburgh publishers.

Meanwhile, Annie had broken down in health and gone to live in Aberdeen. Mrs. Mackay thus became more of a companion to her boy. To Alec this meant the dawning of a new life. He seemed scarcely to have known his mother before. He began especially to love the Sunday evenings when his father was away holding a meeting at a distant part of the parish, for then he had a Bible lesson from her, and the reward of doing well was a missionary story. One evening she told him how she first became interested in missions. That did not mean merely giving an account of an annual missionary address, but a vivid word-picture of her grandfather's minister, the Rev. Adam Lind of Whitehill, New Deer, and a few sentences of his prayer that many young

people might be raised up for service. She remembered, she said, so well the beauty of that summer evening, and the carolling of the birds heard through the open windows.

As Alec gazed at his mother and listened, the sense of a new and great possession stirred within him. 'That gentle woman, who can preach better than any man I ever heard, is *my* mother.' He felt he could do anything for her. He would never let her be sad if he could help it. She had spoken of the needs of Africa.

'Mother,' he said when he rose to go to bed, 'would you like me to go as a missionary to Africa?'

'If God prepares you, my boy,' she answered, 'but not unless.'

Alec felt very solemn. Some One Else was present in the room besides his mother. He felt sure of it.

### III

#### HE FINDS LIFE GOOD

It was impossible that a healthy boy could go on reading and studying as Alec was doing without Nature asserting itself. When about eleven, he, who had never known a day's illness, seemed to lose vigour. He tired of books, his lessons became a burden, he did not even seem to care for fun. Both father and mother became anxious about him, and consulted a doctor, who advised a holiday from lessons and change of air. A tour in the Highlands was decided upon, and Alec came back, not his old self, but a new boy.

Although he learned his lessons well enough, he had not regained his love of books. Most of his time was spent with his printing-press. He drew maps, and became very useful about the manse. He

cleared away the snow, and superintended the sowing and reaping of the crops.

His mother kept bees, which naturally obeyed the laws of their own constitution. They generally chose a Sunday on which to sally forth to their new quarters. One Sunday Alec was set to watch them during the service.

‘Now remember,’ his mother said, ‘you are not to read. If you do, you ’ll forget to watch, and I ’ll lose my bees.’

But watching was a weary business to Alec. ‘There would be no harm,’ he thought, ‘in hurrying them up just the least little bit.’ He tapped the straw hive and listened. Yes, he could hear they were going to swarm, but they were tremendously slow about it.

He took a thin stick, pushed it in at the little door, and moved it gently backwards and forwards, rudely breaking in upon the plans of ‘a heavenly directed instinct.’

A bee came out, then another. ‘The very thing,’ he said. But in a second or

two a black throng issued forth. They soon hung in a cluster on his stick, and about the hive-board ; a few went up his sleeve, and others clung to his bare knees. It was altogether more than he had bargained for.

Mrs. Mackay heard the buzzing and Alec's cries from the manse seat in the church. It was during the prayer, when the congregation stood ; so she managed to get out unobserved. We are not told of any sequel, except that she vowed to rear no more bees.

She said little, but she felt very anxious about Alec. She knew that to force religion upon him would be a mistake, but she prayed earnestly for him. In spite of all his pranks, her boy seemed to grow more lovable every day. An Aberdeen friend of Mr. Mackay came to the neighbourhood of Rhynie on a visit. He took to Alec, and was very interested in his mechanical work. He told him how he had a son who, he hoped and believed,



was going to be a minister. It was arranged that the two should meet, the Aberdeen lad spending a summer holiday at the manse, and, if they got on together, Alec would return to Aberdeen with him in the autumn and attend the Grammar School. They became great friends.

That Aberdeen friend, Principal Hector, late of the Christian College, Calcutta, pictures the holiday Alec and he spent together :—

‘ In 1863, between my first and second years at college, I spent six summer weeks in the manse at Rhynie. Alec Mackay was then a little lad of 13, and I was 17. Though I was supposed to help him in his studies, I am afraid we spent most of our time together out of doors, roaming in the fields, climbing hills, fishing in the Bogie, working in the garden, hoeing the turnips, and doing many odds and ends to the neglect of the Latin lessons. A day on the Tap o’ Noth stands out, as we made a long summer day of it. Dr. Mackay was a devoted student and a really learned man whose knowledge of many sciences was considerable. His Geographies were well known. He was also the author of a little volume *Facts and Dates*,

packed with an amazing amount of knowledge in Science and History. It was also a system of Mnemonics, and to every fact and date was attached a mnemonic line which aided the memory and at the same time described the fact. There must be over three thousand of these in the book. I mention it, as I remember he was working on it at that time, and used to set Alec and me to make mnemonic lines for him—when he got us in! I only remember one line we hammered out for him: “Behold the moons of yonder orb”—supposed to be the exclamation of Galileo when he discovered the moons of Jupiter.

‘The initial consonants of the words in these lines stood for numbers—nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs only being taken, and the verb *to be* disregarded.

‘His diagram was:—

|           |              |              |              |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| $b, c=1.$ | $j, k, s=4.$ | $p, q, z=7.$ | $w, x, y=0.$ |
| $d, f=2.$ | $l=5.$       | $r=8.$       |              |
| $g, h=3.$ | $mn=6.$      | $t, v=9.$    |              |

So the above line—

“Behold (the) moons (of) yonder orb”

gave the date 1608.

‘But, alas, our beautiful exclamation did not appear in the book. Mr. Mackay must have discovered afterwards that the real date was 1609, and being the soul of accuracy there appeared

the fact "Galileo invents the Telescope," and the mnemonic line—

"Observes *new worlds* (through his) *telescope*."

'We enjoyed making these lines on rainy days, when we could not be out !

'I did not see Alec again till he came into the Grammar School in 1864 and stayed with us a short time. The bent of his mind was always practical, and he never settled down to his school books as books, though he did not neglect his work. To *make something* of an ingenious kind that would really be useful was always his ambition ; this was a decided bent from early life, and found full scope when he took to engineering.'



PART TWO  
EARLY MANHOOD



## I

### HE SETS HIMSELF A HIGH AIM

MRS. MACKAY died in the early summer of 1865. Alec was the only one of the family absent from home at the time, and he had been much in her thoughts. 'I want you to give Alec my Bagster's Bible ; it was his father's wedding gift to me,' she said to a relative, who had been a great support to the family in their anxiety and sorrow. ' Tell him to " Search the Scriptures " ; not merely to read them, but to *search*. If he does that I know he will meet me in glory.'

At the funeral he said little either about his great loss or his mother's Bible, but he returned to Aberdeen with a firm resolve in his heart. In the first place he meant to be an engineer. Already his father had told him that he could not afford to give

him the training necessary to gain him a good position in the profession ; but that did not deter Alec. ‘ If I cannot surmount a greater difficulty than that,’ he said, ‘ I will never make an engineer.’

The family removed to Edinburgh, and there he became marked as a young man of earnest purpose. For six years he applied himself to study. Two of these he spent in attending the Free Church Training College for teachers at Moray House. To be under Dr. Maurice Paterson, who was then Rector, Mackay counted a great privilege, and often spoke of it afterwards. During the other four years he attended classes for Engineering, as well as Surveying and Fortification, and also took courses of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy. In the afternoons he could be seen at the engineering works of Miller and Herbert, Leith, dressed in blue overalls, experimenting in model-making, fitting, turning, etc., while for part of the mornings he taught in George Watson’s Ladies’



College, thus earning sufficient money to pay his class fees.

The romance of the lovely Scottish city does not seem to have specially appealed to him. Its poor boys did. On Sunday afternoons he taught in a school in connection with Dr. Guthrie's scheme. There he met some one who became a great friend—a young medical student, by name John Smith, of whom we hear later.

In November 1873 he set out for Germany. He wanted to learn the language, and everything about engineering that that country could teach him. He succeeded in getting a position as draughtsman to a firm who had great engineering works in a suburb of Berlin. There his record was one of such progress in his profession that in course of time the directors offered him a partnership which, had he accepted, would have made him a rich man. But his mother's religion had taken possession of his life, and it was bringing him visions

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that ruled money considerations out of court.

In Berlin, too, he boarded in the family of Hof-Prediger Baur, who introduced him to a circle of their friends who lived an intense religious life. They were all attracted by the earnest young Scotsman. Baur and his wife, the leaders of the circle, called him their *lieber Sohn Mackay*. It was while living with them that Mackay planned a future for himself in which the teaching or preaching of religion and his beloved engineering should go hand in hand.

He told his sister of his plans in answering a letter which she wrote to him on 3rd August 1874. She was full of enthusiasm over a missionary address given by Dr. Burns Thomson in the Chalmers Memorial Church, Edinburgh. Dr. Thomson had urged the young men of the congregation to give themselves to mission work, specially *medical* mission work.

‘ I am not a doctor,’ Mackay wrote back, ‘ and therefore cannot go as such ; but I am an engineer, and propose, if the Lord will, to go as an engineering missionary. I hope especially to connect Christianity with modern civilisation. In England it is true that as Christianity made progress so civilisation advanced ; and as civilisation advanced Christianity became more deeply rooted. You will the more readily agree with me that the two should go together if you read how Mohammedanism makes such tremendous progress in Africa chiefly because it carries with it a higher civilisation than that which existed in the countries to which it comes. . . . I hope to establish a college to train the young men in Religion and Science together. . . . I expect to execute public works, as railways, mines, etc., which for one single-handed is an enormous enterprise.’ <sup>1</sup>

‘ A dream ! A mere castle in the air ! ’ the canny folks of Rhynie would have said,

<sup>1</sup> *Mackay of Uganda*, pp. 20, 21.

had the letter been read to them then, but, even if the 'dream' was never realised, they now, like many others, marvel at the leadings of Providence in Alexander Mackay's life.

## II

### ‘ BOUND IN THE BUNDLE OF LIFE ’

THAT same year, 1874, Stanley was a pall-bearer at Dr. Livingstone’s funeral in Westminster Abbey. He felt that he walked in a procession celebrating a triumph rather than a death. He was a comparatively young man, and, like Mackay, had visions. Many thoughts had passed through his mind since the news of the Master Missionary’s death had reached him. He remembered well how, in 1871, he, a young journalist, was given a commission by his paper—the *New York Herald*—to go and find out if Livingstone were still alive, and if so, to furnish him with fresh supplies.

It promised to be a glorious adventure, but when at last he met the weary-looking old man he had to confess to a feeling of

disappointment. In conversation, however, he discovered that Livingstone and the Arabs of Ujiji differed as to the source of the river at the north of Lake Tanganyika. It would be interesting, he thought, to go and find out who was right, and at once he suggested that Livingstone should accompany him as a guest. The missionary accepted the invitation. They travelled round the Lake together, and found that the Arabs were right. Stanley felt less bored than he expected, and Livingstone must have taken a liking to the young explorer, for, sitting round the camp fire at night, he told him the story of his life and wanderings, and in such a way that he aroused in the journalist an enthusiasm for the 'Righteousness that exalteth a nation.' 'I proceeded to him ready to take umbrage,' Stanley wrote afterwards, 'but I parted from him in tears.'

The experience of Livingstone's funeral made Stanley resolve to complete the work

Livingstone had begun. He immediately set about making plans. There were several geographical difficulties he meant to clear up ; but his main object was to investigate and report upon the haunts of the slave-trader. He lost no time. When it was still 1874 he arrived at Zanzibar, and in November of that year he had left for the interior at the head of a force of 356 men. He had taken with him the sections of a boat, and on 8th March 1875 started to sail round Lake Victoria Nyanza. At the north end of the Lake he found things different from what they were in the countries at the south end. He met civility and hospitality, and was struck with the implicit obedience of the natives to the king. It made him think of the old feudal system. Mtesa, the king, struck him as being a remarkable man ; impressionable to a degree, he seemed to have a glimpse of something beyond the usual outlook of a savage. After giving Stanley a friendly greeting

and a princely gift of food, he told him of how his mother had dreamed a dream, and in it had seen a white man in a boat on the Lake coming this way, and 'lo, you have come.'

Compared with other countries in Central Africa, Stanley saw that Uganda had made wonderful progress in civilisation. There were roads and causeways in the swamps ; a system of dispensing justice ; an army of 150,000, and a navy of 325 canoes, each carrying a crew of 50 men.

He discovered further that the improvement in Mtesa and in the condition of his country was due to the efforts of a Moslem missionary. The idea fascinated him. 'If Mohammedanism had done so much for Mtesa and his country,' he reflected, 'surely Livingstone's religion could do more.' He resolved to appeal to England for help, and at once set about trying to replace Mtesa's faith in Mohammed by belief in Jesus of Nazareth. He translated the Gospel of Luke, and wrote an abridge-



ment of part of the Bible in a language that Mtesa could read, and told the story of Jesus Christ so effectively that the king renounced Mohammedanism and promised to build a Christian church. He had the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and ‘Thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself,’ written in Arabic on a board and hung in the palace so that all his court might see. He also begged Stanley to stay and educate the people.

Stanley could not accept the invitation for himself, but promised to get some English missionaries to come and settle in Uganda. He at once sent to England a glowing account of the country as a field for missionary work. His letter has become historic. At the end of it were the words :—

‘Oh, that some pious practical missionary would come here! Such an one, if he can be found, would become the saviour of Africa. Nowhere in all the pagan world is there a more promising field than

Uganda. Here is your opportunity ; embrace it. The people on the shores of Uganda call upon you.'

Stanley's letter was entrusted to Lieutenant Linant de Bellefond, a French officer in the Egyptian Service, whom Gordon sent on a mission to Uganda while Stanley was there. Linant was killed on his return journey, but the blood-stained letter was found by one of Gordon's men concealed in the leg of one of the Frenchman's long boots, and sent on to England, where it arrived in November 1875. It appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*. The challenge was immediately taken up, and subscriptions poured in, £24,000 being subscribed within a few days.

One cold night, about Christmas 1875, Mackay finished reading Stanley's *How I Found Livingstone*. On laying the book down, his eye caught the words, 'Henry Wright, Hon. Sec., Church Missionary Society,' in an old copy of the *Edinburgh Daily Review*. He took up the paper,

and found the signature was appended to an appeal for men to go out as pioneer missionaries to Uganda. There and then he replied to Mr. Wright's letter, and offered his services. When Dr. Duff, the famous missionary, heard of Mackay's offer to the Church Missionary Society, he wrote a calm, kind letter, urging him to wait for an opening in the Free Church Mission at Lake Nyasa, or to join the Church of Scotland's Mission in the same district.

But, strange to say, the same post bringing Dr. Duff's letter also brought him one from the C.M.S. accepting his services.



## PART THREE

### DAYS OF ENTHUSIASM AND DISCIPLINE



# I

## SETTING OUT

A GREAT deal of work had to be done before Mackay was ready to start forth on his life-work.

When he went to the C.M.S. committee rooms in London to receive instructions, he found the members ready with maps and plans. 'There are two rivers opposite Zanzibar,' they said, 'the Wami and the Kingani. If they are navigable you might be able to get by water to the foot of the hills of Usagara. This would shorten the land journey by about 120 miles.' The journey up country, they informed him, would be extremely trying, and very expensive. 'We want you, therefore, to explore the rivers, and are willing to pay for a light cedar boat for the purpose.'

They also agreed that if an engine and boiler could be procured for £300, and be fitted into a wooden boat to be built by the missionaries on the Nyanza, the money would be forthcoming.

Many a trudge Mackay had through London streets before he succeeded in getting an engineer to manufacture the boiler according to his design—on the principle of welded rings, yet each light enough to be carried up country by two men. Then he had to choose a great many tools, for Stanley had written instructing the missionaries to bring a supply of hammers, saws, augurs, chisels, axes, hatchets, adzes, trowels, a couple of good-sized anvils, a forge and bellows, an assortment of nails and tacks, a plough, spades, shovels, pick-axes, etc.

The little cedar boat had to be built in sections light enough to be slung on poles and carried by African porters.

When it came near the time for going,



Mackay again called at the headquarters of the C.M.S. He was told that seven volunteers had come forward, but not one of them was a doctor. Mackay immediately thought of his dear friend John Smith, and at once wrote to him. There was no time for an answer to come before he had to pay his farewell visit to the C.M.S. rooms. Three of the party had already sailed, but when Mackay went into the committee room, there sat Dr. Smith—John—smiling as he always did when he saw Mackay. He had hurried down from Edinburgh, and had been accepted half an hour before. As one by one the volunteers bade good-bye to the Committee, they each said something. Mackay was the last to speak.

*‘ I want to remind the Committee,’ he said, ‘ that within six months they will probably hear that one of us is dead. . . . One of us at least—it may be I—will surely fall before that. But what I want to say is this : when the news comes, do not be cast down, but send*

*some one else immediately to fill the vacant place.'*

The names of the eight pioneers were : George Shergold Smith, Ex-Lieutenant Royal Navy ; Rev. C. T. Wilson, a Manchester curate ; T. O'Neill, an architect ; John Smith, a doctor from Edinburgh ; W. M. Robertson, an artisan ; James Robertson, a blacksmith (rejected by the doctors, but went at his own expense and risk) ; A. J. Clarke, an engineer ; and Alexander Mackay, Scottish engineer.

Shergold Smith was the leader. When he offered to go he wrote : ' Send me out in any capacity, I am willing to take the lowest place.' Mackay could not have had a better man over him.

Mackay and O'Neill embarked on the liner *Peshawar* on 27th April 1876. Shergold Smith joined them at Aden on 17th May. He had sailed from Falmouth in his own little ship *Highland Lassie*, and now left her in charge of the old mate, while he joined his comrades on the mail

steamer for Zanzibar. They reached the island on 29th May. 'Thanks to Almighty God,' Mackay wrote home, 'we are at our journey's end—let me rather say beginning.'

## II

### THREE TIMES SET BACK

IT did not at first seem a very formidable task to explore the Wami River. Mackay riveted the sections of the little boat—christened the *Daisy*—and on 12th June 1876 Shergold Smith and he, with a crew of fourteen Africans, started from Sadani to go up the Wami. They were eight days on the river, and made about seventy miles. ‘It is frightfully winding,’ he wrote home from the boat, ‘and navigable perhaps two or three times as far as we went.’ But the atmosphere was depressing. There was a heavy growth of bushes on the banks, which gave an air of mystery to the place; for aught they knew, there might be wild beasts or savage men lurking about in the gloom—they did not know then that the people were

notorious cannibals. Shergold Smith and he took notes and made charts of the river's course, but it wound about in such an extraordinary way that anything very crooked would almost have done. Then, by sounding, they discovered that the water was falling about two inches a day, and at its deepest it was but from five to seven feet. There were granite boulders showing at some parts ; the *Daisy* might get smashed.

The illness of Lieutenant Smith decided them to return. Mackay felt relieved ; he did not like the place. ' Lieutenant Smith had fever three times within the last five days,' he wrote, ' and the last attack reduced him so very much that he was not even able to sit up. To the loving kindness and protection of the good Lord I owe perfect immunity from poisonous malaria all the time. As we slept night after night between the jungly banks of the river, the kind eye of the Redeemer watched over us.'

When they got back they were swamped, *Daisy* and all, by the waves off Sadani. After having had Lieutenant Smith seen to in the chief's house, Mackay chartered a dhow and crossed to Zanzibar, where he found the *Highland Lassie* had arrived, besides the rest of the missionary party. O'Neill was down with fever; Mackay, however, got one of the Robertsons to return with him to Sadani to rescue the *Daisy*.

Lieutenant Smith was too ill to venture up the Kingani, but the Vice-Consul agreed to take his place. He could speak Swahili, which was a great help in the circumstances. He and Mackay found that the river was navigable as far as they went (about 160 miles), but it was more winding than the Wami. Even the little *Daisy* was too long to get round the sharp bends without risk. Steering was impossible. The idea of a water route had to be entirely abandoned.

Mackay was impatient to be at his real

work. 'Now we are starting in earnest,' he said to himself, when at last he was over head and ears in the work of preparing for the great trek westward.

The expedition was divided into four sections. Mackay led the third, with 200 porters, 14 soldiers (who had never had a gun in their hands), 3 carpenters, 1 mason, 4 donkeys (Shergold Smith said that Mackay could manage a donkey better than any of the party), and his little dog Bobby.

The difficulties connected with porterage brought a new experience to Mackay. The porters signed a contract agreeing to serve for a certain period and receive advance payment. The employer likewise bound himself to treat them kindly and reasonably, and in the case of illness to do his best for them. In cases of disagreement between man and man, he would judge justly and prevent the ill-treatment of the weak by the strong, and never permit the oppression of those unable to

resist. The porters then promised, on the above conditions, that they would do their duty like men and endeavour to give their master their united support, and to be faithful servants to the best of their ability.

Mackay and his company started from Bagamoyo on 27th August 1876. Shergold Smith remained there for some time in order to secure more porters, for the *Daisy*, when unriveted, took fifty men to carry her. After a day or two's experience of the march, Mackay wrote home: 'Suddenly to have stepped into the position of father to such a large family of children is by no means a joke. It occurs to me often as a poser—if two hundred men on march can give such endless trouble, what anxiety must poor Moses have been in on his march with more than two million souls. "The Lord was with him" seems to be the only explanation, and my fears are all calmed by the fact that this caravan is the Lord's, and He will give all necessary grace for guiding it.'



For the first week or two he was indeed hard put to it. Like spoilt children, many of the men began to regret that they had undertaken what proved to be very severe work indeed. Patient forbearance was necessary. 'The black brother,' says Stanley, 'must be forgiven seventy times seven, until the period of probation is past.'

Small-pox unfortunately broke out. Mackay had vaccinated as many of the men as he had lymph for, but that only meant two or three dozen. He saw a boy wading knee-deep in a swamp with the eruption on his legs. The treatment seemed to agree with him, for he was soon as well as possible. But one man died, and his mates took his body out 150 yards from the camp and threw it down. They would not agree to bury it; they said they were Mohammedans. Determined to show that he cared for his men, Mackay tied a rope round the body with his own hands, so as to save the two or three men who followed him from

infection, and then ordered them to drag it about a hundred yards to the bed of an almost dry river, where a proper grave was made.

Meanwhile, one of the party—the artisan, W. M. Robertson—died at Zanzibar. And when Mackay arrived at Mpwapwa he was disappointed to find the other two ill. J. Robertson, the blacksmith, had become a perfect wreck. He was lying in a mud hut up the hill, ready to die if he were allowed. Mackay was in despair ; the anxiety began to tell upon him, and he was soon so ill that he sent back word to Lieutenant Smith, who hurried up with one man, at the rate of thirty miles a day, to relieve him. Unfortunately, he took the wrong road, and went on ahead. Mackay heard of this, and sent messengers to catch him up. By this time his friend, Dr. John Smith, had arrived, and they marched together for a couple of happy days, when they overtook Shergold Smith. But

Mackay did not seem to get well, and the journey through the Marenga Mkali Desert, where neither food nor water was to be had, made him worse. He became so weak that he was persuaded to allow himself to be carried back to the coast on the shoulders of two strong men. There were other eight who took charge of his tent and various other belongings.

The Great Lake was still a dream.

### III

#### MACKAY'S WAGON-TRACK

HE was very ill during the journey to the coast, and believed himself to be dying. But he had a rest at a village where there was good water, as well as butter and eggs in abundance, and, what was better, home letters. These good things soon set him on his legs again. Back at Bagamoyo in January, he heard that Clarke, the other engineer, had been ill at Mpwapwa, and intended going on to the coast.

Mr. Wright of the C.M.S., hearing of Mackay's illness, wrote telling him not to start for Uganda till June. He might obey that injunction, but it was not in Mackay's nature to rest. Immediately he set about fitting up a caravan of about seventy loads, and despatched it under charge of an Englishman named Morton.

Early in March he received instructions from Headquarters to set to work upon a wagon-track from Sadani to Mpwapwa. Camping at Sadani, which he did for some time, he had many opportunities of observing the methods of slave-traders. He was filled with horror at the revelations the passing days brought to him. With the eagerness of a boy, he made up his mind to 'do his bit' in trying to relieve the situation.

But he soon came to realise his utter helplessness. Individuals amongst the slave-trading Arabs in certain districts could at that time, we are told, have easily put five thousand guns in the field, and a combination of them would have meant the extermination of Europeans and all missions. Mackay soon had, for the time being at least, to decide to let slavers pass by quietly. It was evident, he said, 'that the chief and people of Sadani were determined rather to help the infernal traffic than stop it.'

In March he had a bad time with remit-

tent fever, and had to be removed from Sadani to Zanzibar, where he was taken to the house of Mr. Brown, of Smith and Co., agents of the C.M.S. There he was near the doctor's residence, and in every way was made comfortable. 'As for Dr. Robb, the Consular doctor,' he wrote, 'he has been most unwearying in his attendance, coming to see me late and early, three or four times a day, and supplying me with medicine free, as I am a missionary.'

He began the proposed wagon-track enthusiastically. In the planning of the work he had the assistance of Susi, one of Dr. Livingstone's faithful African servants, who had helped to carry his body to the coast. Mackay had engaged Susi merely as interpreter, but he was a great help when it came to collecting the tools necessary for road-making. These were American axes, English hatchets, picks and spades, and saws, a donkey's load of nails, and hammers to drive them in with, a two-foot grindstone mounted on a wooden frame, etc.

On 22nd April 1877 he wrote to Dr. Robb : ' Here is perpetual rain, and the place is either afloat or being washed away. I am faithfully taking quinine twice a day, and find it necessary enough. I hope to start cutting away the African forest (!) on Tuesday. I shall come back for the carts. I took a ride last night to westward, but found the road, so far as I went, a kind of porridge and milk. . . .

' I have told Canham to be ready to bring you over whatever time you find convenient. I cannot say how glad I shall be to have you for a few days here. Come at once.'

The road-making was difficult work. They had to cut through a dense and thorny jungle ; the Snider sword-bayonets were the only things that conquered it, and the wood of the baobab trees was so hard that it turned the axe edge. But, on the whole, the men were happy. As they worked they sang a lilt with words that had little or no meaning, but they were

evidently composed for their master's benefit :—

‘ Eh, eh msungu *mbaya*  
Tu katti miti,  
Tu ende Ulaya.’

Mackay paraphrases it thus :—

‘ Oh, is not the white man very bad to be cutting down the trees to make a way for Englishmen to come.’

Although it was hard work, there were rests by the way. He wrote some of his home letters then, and there was an atmosphere of genuine happiness about them :—

‘ The prospect is delightful here on all sides. I sit at present like Abraham in his tent door. My servants, my flocks, and my herds, are about me. Westward, the land rolls away in densely wooded ridges. To the north, between the lines of hills and the sea, are stretches of wood and lawn alternately—all fine soil, but none cultivated.’

And he tells of how Susi and he sauntered out together, and how they remarked to



each other how lazy the people were ; not a mouthful of food was to be bought, and hundreds of square miles of fertile land were lying all around uncultivated.

Big ideas were taking shape in Mackay's mind. ' If England were thoroughly Christian, what could she not do. . . . A few Englishmen, with their houses on this high ground and their property below, would, within a year, turn the landscape far and near into most productive ground. East is the village of Sadani, on the sea, and beyond, one can see the island of Zanzibar, one of the most fruitful in the Indian Ocean. South are the connected plains of the Wami River and Sadani ' ; and he adds, ' If Lot were alive, I think he would have gone there in preference to the plain of Sodom.'

As they made progress, the condition of Africa became a great problem to Mackay. At one place a slave-track crossed the road at his very door. ' I shudder every time I cross it,' he said, ' when I think how many poor victims are

nightly driven along that path. Somebody must do this work ; why not I ? ’

Meanwhile his hands were full. To Dr. Robb ( ‘ *In loco parentis mei* ’ ) he wrote :—

‘ The nature of our work causes the men to cut their legs and feet rather often, and ulcers almost invariably follow. These I have dressed with carbolic acid and water every day, and some of the worst cases are now recovering. Dysentery,’ he adds, ‘ has been bad amongst the men and women. One fellow died before my men came back from the coast, but the Dover’s powder just arrived in time to save another, who is now all right. To-day I arrived here, and have since been making diligent inquiry as to turning off to the S.W. so as to make Mpwapwa by the valley of the Mkundi River and thus avoid the mountains. My working force is unhappily much reduced by sickness. At present I have only thirty hands able, ten being on the sick list. I have just emerged from the damp valley of the Mvue River—the real Wami, coming from the north and not from the west as Stanley has put it—and I can tell you I am glad enough. I had three days’ work in its banks in a damp forest of gigantic india-rubber trees and creepers—“ it took me all my time,” as they say in Scotland, to steer clear of fever.

‘ One thing I want very much for the fellows’ legs is some Basilicon, or other healing ointment. I should not trouble you for this but I can get nothing at all in this country in the shape of oil or fat. I am perfectly ashamed to keep asking for so many things, and only do so as being one form of the orthodox filial request to Pater, “*da mihi panem.*”

‘ Tell Mrs. Robb my housewife has proved a “helpmeet” for me, otherwise I should be in rags. My boys are fonder of borrowing my needles than of returning them. You would not know my dog “Bobby” now, he has grown so much. He is at present a victim to circumstances, being tied up by the ramrod of a gun, as I have no chain and he has cut every rope a hundred times notwithstanding my chastising him on every occasion. Bobby and I have *hard times* just now, being obliged to chew nothing but hard cobs of Indian corn and mahogo roots. Our biscuits were finished long ago, and we have no flour or even oatmeal. We shall enjoy these luxuries when we get back to civilised life again.’

From Ugombo Lake he again writes to Zanzibar :—

‘ 4th August 1877.

‘ . . . I take the opportunity of a few of my old men (who went on to the Lake) returning to the

coast. They say two or three more are a few days behind with letters from the Nyanza party. They bring sad news—that Dr. John Smith is dead !

‘ I do not place perfect reliance on the report till the letters come. It has given me rather a shock, as he was my own intimate friend, and the most amiable by far among our number. I wonder all the more as he was the youngest and healthiest of the party. . . . When the doctors die, what hope can there be for the rest of us in this terrible country ?

‘ I am now within thirty miles of Mpwapwa, but have about forty miles to cut, and all in a perfect wilderness. When I shall get out of this I don’t know, but if we stay more than a few days now we shall all die of hunger, for the nearest village is some thirty miles off.

‘ I am just a sort of recovering from fever—my second attack. But neither has been very severe, I think. At present I am “ as fusionless as a dockan,” as they say in Scotland, and just at a time when I have heavy reconnoitring to do to find a decent way. Still I hope to get finished sometime—and soon.’

On 9th August he wrote : ‘ The news turns out only too true. Dr. Smith died of dysentery at Kageyi on 11th May. We

will all miss him much, and I more than the rest, as he was a "chum" of mine, and I am responsible for his coming to Africa.

'A thousand thanks for all the good things you and Mrs. Robb sent me. If you had seen such charges of quinine I rammed down when the bottle arrived !

'My fever is all over now, and more than that, the road, *i.e.* wagon-track, is finished, and I am knocking up a house for the newcomers. Clarke's house has disappeared. A heap of rubbish only marks the place.'

He was proud to have come to the end of a trying task ; but even when he mourned the loss of one of his dearest friends, he did not forget that there was an economic side to the question of road-making missionaries.

'In making a road for ourselves, so we make a way for others to follow after, a way for the trader to enter with his wares and return a richer man. Such being the

case, it would be but fair for us to expect that such purely secular work as road-making be taken up and vigorously exercised by those who will the most largely profit by the undertaking, instead of leaving it to be done at the expense of the Church.'

## IV

### HOPE, PERPLEXITY, DESPAIR

BACK at Sadani once more, word came to him from Headquarters to try the bullock-wagon system of transit to the Lake, but heavy rains had come and he could not move ; the place was a perfect swamp and the road impassable.

Three young men had been sent to help him by the C.M.S., and he began to feel restless on their account. ' I would gladly be away,' he wrote to Dr. Robb, ' as this place is most uncomfortable, not to say unhealthy, and I am afraid for the three young fellows with me, Baxter, Tytherleigh, and Copplestone. I fear Copplestone is not strong, and I am relieved that he goes to Zanzibar for a day or two till I get up to Ndumi, if a kind Providence removes this judgment in the weather.

Tytherleigh goes with him to get a few men to accompany us to Nyguru, where I mean to show them a good spot for settlement, a hundred yards from the coast.'

At Ndumi both Copplestone and Tytherleigh were feeling rather shaky, and although Mackay heard of Stanley being at Zanzibar, and wanted very much to see him, that he might add to his information about Uganda, he resisted the temptation.

'I may have to come later,' he wrote. 'Lieutenant Smith wants a great many things sent on to him which I must see supplied. If I do come to Zanzibar, I must have a lesson in darning from Mrs. Robb. My boys sew up my woollen socks with cotton thread. I wish there were more of us, but I must just try to leave charge in the hands of Tytherleigh and Copplestone. Tytherleigh was taken very ill with fever immediately on his return from Zanzibar. I was glad Baxter (doctor) was here to nurse him. The young fellow is all right now, and has since attained his majority into the bargain. Copplestone was seedy when Baxter left us at Ndumi for Zanzibar, but soon pulled round. We have



given him charge of the porters and the commissariat, that he may have a little practice, because he afterwards must do such work on his own hook. . . .

‘ . . . But oh the mud and water we have to contend with ! Wheels down to the axles hopelessly, and oxen plunging about like hippos, prevented us from doing more than ten miles in ten days, even though we have spanned in generally the teams of two carts in one, besides leaving behind at starting nearly one-third of each load.

‘ My men were getting quite disorganised by staying so long at Sadani, and mutiny and desertion were getting too rife amongst them—certainly anything but pleasant or conducive to health, amid plenty other occasions for fever. But now we are in beautifully high ground and fondly hoping for fair weather.’

He was pleased to see that his road had been used by the London Missionary Society’s agents ; but he goes on to say :—

‘ I have never received any word from the authorities of that Society to the effect that they were aware the C.M.S. had made the clearing at an outlay of considerably over \$1000, besides four months’ time. There is no trace now of their wheels on the road, except where the

inordinately heavy wagons have spoilt what was intended for lighter carts and shorter teams.

‘Now, a year ago, I wrote to the C.M.S. *Intelligencer* advocating the use of light Scotch carts, and only 10 cwt. load in each. Nothing short of 3000 lbs. would, however, be looked at as reasonable by the L.M.S. They have changed their minds now. I have lost much time by trying to imitate them in attempting heavy loads, and find myself glad to adopt my first plan of 10 cwt. per cart.’

Christmas Eve 1877 saw him in strange surroundings, and his thoughts wandered to his home and friends:—

‘On this evening I recall many associations, mostly of a pleasant kind. Believe me, among other family circles I have my thoughts too in the kind doctor’s house at Zanzibar. To-night—*der heilige Abend*—is a great time in old Germany, perhaps as in no other country; still, I prefer English solid ideas of roast turkey and dump. to shining fir-trees even though accompanied by much in the way of sentiment and presents.

‘Tytherleigh, Coppelstone, and myself are pushing on slowly, and only by dint of rather hard work—so much of the ground is pulpy at present.’

He feels afraid to have to face the two large rivers, the Rukigura and the Mkundi, and find them impassable. It was as he feared.

On New Year's Day 1878 he wrote to Zanzibar :—

‘ We are in rather a nice mess just now, being engaged in crossing a huge flooded river running to the sea as fast as it can, and one would think a great deal faster.

‘ Yesterday we got half the goods over after a deal of swimming and hauling of ropes. We have turned one of the carts into a barge or boat, having caulked it up.

‘ If you had seen my grief of mind when our cargo crossed yesterday, and the boat just then sprung a leak, or by some lurch or whirl of the river drew herself full of water, and all of a sudden my box of instruments and my box of books began to float inside. The instruments were all right, as I had them in a water-tight tin box. But oh the books ! Botany and Arabic seemed to have got into a sort of pulpy proximity, while Cameron (*Across Africa*) and Livingstone (*Last Journals*) found themselves exploring the same river, and soaked in the same water. Well, it might have been worse, but I am always sorry to see good books go wrong.

'Now for the rest of the stuff, and the oxen. I dare say to-day and to-morrow will see us all over.

'I am all alone on the other side of the river, having got over yesterday, and not being able to get back. I must take my dinner now, as there was no means of sending me any last night. We had stopped for the day before I thought of it, and we could not get a start again.

'What are you doing to Dr. Baxter? or rather what has he been doing? I must hold you responsible for him, although he is a homeopath. Probably he needs all the more looking after on that account. He sends me letters at any rate in homeopathic doses. I have not had a line or globule of a line from him since I sent him back from Ndumi six weeks ago. I must hear too from yourself. I have not heard from you for a very long time. It cannot be that *you* are practising homeopathy.'

The next letter written to Dr. Robb is dated 22nd February 1878 :—

'I have what I fear is sad news to write you about. I have just heard that there has been fighting at Ukerewe, and that two Englishmen there have been killed, and their dhow captured by the natives. Who can these be except Lieut. Smith and O'Neill? If the tale is true, a

terrible calamity has befallen our Mission. I can only hope for the best, and that the story is partly or altogether a pure fabrication.

' I have written to Dr. Kirk to make inquiries, as I believe the Arabs at Unyanyembe have sent letters to inform the Sultan of the matter. Meantime, what can I do except push on, or rather try to push on? Ahead is all rain, and I intend trying to drive over the mountains instead of taking the Mkundi River valley route where the L.M.S. and Broyon have gone and have not now an ox left "to tell the tale."

' I heard to-day from Tytherleigh. He is encamped 95 miles inland, and cannot get farther for mud and swollen rivers. Tytherleigh says his oxen are dying right off. I have lost a large number too this trip. . . . I only wish one of our heads would come out here and give us a hand, for it is not to be expected that in the *Bureau* one can steer even a C.M.S. ship across East Africa.

' Some 40 miles back I nearly came to sudden grief. The cart wheel caught my foot and down I went while the calf of the other leg had also to serve as a rail. I had to be carried in my hammock for three or four days, but am now hobbling about; 600 lbs. on each wheel you will say could not do much harm, but it made me useless for a few days.

‘ All the powers of Sin and Satan seem to have conspired against our progress, for with death of oxen, desertion of men, rainy weather, flooded rivers, muddy roads, and the determination of the natives to plant their corn on our road and then make a row if we go through, and worse than any, a terrible visitation of vipanga—a sort of tsetse fly that bites man and beast “to the extreme effusion of blood”—who can do much so single handed ?

‘ If I had less inclination to fever, and more strength, I would have more hope.

‘ But I shall look for the ultimate success of our Mission whatever becomes of the men, for the cause is not ours but of God.’

## V

### REBELLION

HE rebelled against the judgment of men. In the letters addressed to Dr. Robb ('*In loco parentis mei*'), we have Mackay telling out his sorrows, and what he feels to be his wrongs, to one who, he knows, will listen with the understanding sympathy of a father:—

‘ 24th March ’78.

‘ I suppose you have heard already a good deal more about my doings of late than I really was doing myself.

‘ Still, I must give you my version of the matter, as I wish to ask your advice, for you are my best friend in Zanzibar and have ever been so.

‘ When I came up on Tytherleigh after my run to the coast, I found him and Henry in great trouble. Tytherleigh and Copplestone had built a capital house near the Mkundi River some 95

miles from the coast, as it was the Society's order to grant us liberty to have a station there. But at that place the oxen soon fell ill (nearly all) and were dying off—several each day. When I was still more than 30 miles off, Tytherleigh sent me word that the bullocks were dying, when I sent him back orders to leave the carts and goods in Henry's charge, and drive the surviving animals into the first oxen station (called Mgulika) in the Usagara Mountains. The Mkundi River was then high in flood, and as soon as it fell a little, Tytherleigh started and got the oxen all over in one day. But the natives on the other side refused to let him pass, and beat the war drum, and prepared to fight, when all our men ran away leaving Tytherleigh alone. He had his revolver and gun, which kept the natives from touching him. But they drove the oxen all back into the river, where many, being too sick to swim against the current, were nearly lost. Tytherleigh got back to the house and quickly sent me word of what had happened, adding that the chief on whose ground they had built the house was in great terror, as the enemy on the opposite side were going to attack him for allowing the white men to settle on his ground. I sent on a number of guns and powder to Tytherleigh and Henry and bade them take no more steps till I came.



' After two days I arrived with my two carts and next day went over with Tytherleigh and two faithfals to try to make terms with the savages on the other side. They had planted mtama on our road and therefore determined we should not go through. After much "shauri" (discussion) they helped me to find another way to pass without going through the fields, except one little piece, and for that I promised to pay damages in cloth. We then came back satisfied, and told the men that we had made all right, and would drive the oxen over next day. The river had now fallen very low and I was anxious to catch it thus before rain came on again. But they one and all struck, and returned the guns they had previously asked for. They were determined, they said, not to go another step with us. One moment they said they were afraid; the next that they were tired, although they had rested about 6 weeks—*i.e.* the most of them, while the others had only a month previously left the coast, and all were pledged to go on with me to Ukerewe.

' All quiet remonstrance on my part was in vain. I even promised to reduce the period of engagement to reaching Mpwapwa, or less than a third of the contract distance. I promised to take the carts to pieces that they might carry them past the shambas they were afraid to

drive through. But all to no purpose. They scouted the idea of either the Consul or the Sultan punishing them for breach of contract and desertion, while they had little care for forfeiting their wages. They had already got \$10 advance each, and some of them much more, and had been fed highly, besides getting an ox to eat every other day. I told them I should not press them then to go on, but I could not have the oxen stay longer in the place, and without their aid I could not drive the oxen on, still less haul them through the river. But they said they cared nothing for my losing all my oxen.

‘Night came on, and had it not been very dark, and a terrible road just behind, I believe they would have all disappeared before morning. But they knew they could only find the road impossible to escape by in the dark. They then grew malicious and threatened first to destroy the cattle boma (enclosure) that all the oxen might wander about where hyænas are every night numerous. Next, they threatened to break down our house, while ultimately they came to the conclusion that the best thing to do was to set fire to the roof. We have much gunpowder amongst our goods, besides explosive cartridges for blasting, so we had all three to sit up the whole night at different corners lest

they should put their threat into execution. I told them that we were armed, and that if anything of the kind was attempted I should shoot those who ventured on such a trick. I gave them clearly to understand also that if they despised the powers at the coast, I was determined they should not leave me to lose all my oxen there, and that I would be obliged to fire on those who took the lead in deserting, if I saw them run away in spite of all I had given in to them.

‘The most of the night they spent in singing and merriment, and when dawn came, they one and all bound up their mats and prepared to start. I again protested, and when that was of no use, I showed my revolver and said I should fire at the first man who started off. But they got up a yell, and spurred each other on, and in a body took to the road.

‘Before firing, I threatened again, being reluctant to shoot, but that being of no avail, I fired carelessly a few shots with my revolver, wounding no one. I thought that would frighten them, but seeing it did not, I took aim at the legs of a few who were running, and now some little distance off. Tytherleigh having fired at the same time, the result was that four men were wounded, two in the arm, and two in the leg. The effect was as I desired. Those not yet quite

started put their mats down, several turned back, and some half a dozen ran away entirely.

‘I had already laid to hand some bandages and carbolic acid water, and as we ceased firing immediately on seeing the deserters stop, I at once dressed the wounds of the four men. This astonished them more than the firing had done. They were not long in promising submission instead of rebellion half an hour before, and came to beg for their rations, which I at once paid them.

‘That day I let them rest, and next morning we set to work and got the oxen across the river, and drove them right beyond the shambas, the natives even helping us in the most friendly manner. The men were then much ashamed of their cowardice, and have since behaved remarkably well. Just as we were going to cross the river, however, I found some half a dozen men had run away. It was most amusing to hear the others talk of the cowardice of these when we formed our first camp beyond the shambas, and, instead of meeting hostility from the natives, they had found our words true that there was nothing to fear.

‘I should have mentioned that Copplestone had already gone on to Mpwapwa a week before I reached the house. I believe Henry fired one

or two shots, and four Mombasa men—the only fellows who stood by us, and helped to watch the house against fire at night—fired off their guns, but only in the air.

‘I have now made three journeys from our house to here (distance 18 miles) with the men who resumed work (45 in all), and now we have both the large carts and a small stock of cloth and provisions here, and with these Tytherleigh will go on to Mpwapwa, where he will discharge the men, keeping of course such as prefer to go on.

‘Now, instead of going on the useless task of pursuing our deserters to bring them to justice for mutiny, and desertion, and breach of contract, we resolved to let them alone till we got on to Mpwapwa at any rate, and had discharged those who wished to go back from there.

‘But meantime our rebels and deserters run to the coast and go to the Consulate, where our British political agent, instead of apprehending them for mutiny and desertion, granted them a summons for assault against Tytherleigh and myself—we to appear accused of said crime, in Zanzibar on 9th April, and Henry to appear also on same day as witness !

‘Now, I ask, who gave the Consul jurisdiction in the interior of Africa ?

‘If the British Government has no power whatever to defend the lives and property of British subjects, where is its right to accuse British subjects of defending their lives and property themselves, by the only means in their power ?

‘Already the Consul’s action has done much harm. Our men feel free to rebel, or disobey orders, or desert as they like, knowing that we dare not even flog the refractory without being summoned to Zanzibar for assault. Until I see the articles published granting the Bombay Government sole jurisdiction in the interior of Africa, and find it exercising such power for my protection, and the protection of the Mission property committed to my charge, am I not right in defending my own life and said property by my own strength ?

‘Even although the charge were relevant, which I entirely disbelieve, how can Henry leave the house and goods to go to Zanzibar ? As it is, he dare not go out of sight of the door. His few boys are too dishonest to be trusted. We cannot leave the goods in charge of the little chief close by, as he is in danger of being attacked by the natives across the river, who would be only too glad to avail themselves of the chance of such booty as they would find in our house. Nor do I know anything of the natives them-

selves close by. Will the Consulate be pledged for their honesty and return to us the value of all they may steal—cloth, and private effects, maps, journals, etc.? How too is Tytherleigh to leave his men and goods and oxen among the Usagara Mountains on a part of the road where the Wahumba are constantly making raids and plundering caravans—oxen being besides the greatest temptation to them? We have not a single faithful man in whose hands to entrust a single bale of cloth.

‘And am I to turn back from going to assist Wilson who is in difficulty, having lost both his guns, and not knowing how to act in the present crisis when our two head men have been shot without even the Consul granting a summons against their murderers? Am I to wade back to Zanzibar, miles of the road being at present another Mkata swamp—water up to the waist all along the Nguru valley, and run the risk of fever and my old enemy dysentery just because the Consul steps beyond his jurisdiction and grants a slave a summons against me?’

‘Never, till now, was anything of the kind attempted as for a Consul to interfere with traveller’s rights in the lawless interior.

‘The matter is one which ought to be made public, and of course I shall communicate to

the Society in the first instance the facts as I have stated them to you.

'I have no desire to be guilty of contempt of the Consul's court. But to appear before it on the day he quotes would be alike imprudent and impossible as involving consequences and incurring risks which the Consul's power cannot in the least avoid. Still, to save scandal and talk, I have written Messrs. Smith and Brown to try to get hold of the man (a slave) called Hamis, who was one of the wounded and who afterwards deserted and who got the summons from the Consul against me, and to pay him what sum they think proper to withdraw the summons. This I know will lead to further trouble, as it will encourage my other men to apply for summonses to make money out of me. But before I engage another set of men I shall have opportunity to see the limits of the Consul's jurisdiction clearly defined.

'If this cannot be done, please ask Mr. Smith to have the day of trial postponed till a more convenient season when I shall have occasion to be in Zanzibar.

'Please drop me a line with your opinion on the matter. I know you will advise me well as a good friend alone can advise a helpless fellow all alone here, and beset with difficulties quite enough to tax one's strength to overcome



without the addition of the present ill-timed interference.

‘ I start D.V. for the Lake to-morrow early—  
I take 5 men with me. Please write by the  
carrier this month for Nyanza.’

## VI

### ‘I CANNOT LET WILSON STARVE’

HE found it necessary to take six men with him instead of five, there were so many loads to carry.

The difficulties of portorage were solved in a way that he did not expect. When about twelve miles west of Mpwapwa, they entered the great waterless plain—the Marenga Mkali. Mackay knew it by reputation as a hunting-ground of robbers, so he ordered his men to march single file. One evening the last of the six porters had fallen a few yards behind ; a gang of robbers noticed this, fell upon him, seized his load, and disappeared.

The contents of this porter’s bale meant a great deal to Mackay ; it contained :—

|                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 10 lbs. of ship biscuit. | 1 tin of meat.          |
| 3 lbs. cheese.           | 1 bottle of brandy (for |
| 1 tin of jam.            | medicine).              |

|                        |                          |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2 oz. quinine.         | 60 rounds cartridges.    |
| 8 candles.             | 1 pocket filter.         |
| 18 boxes of matches.   | 1 large water gourd.     |
| 1 Colt revolver (new). | 1 parcel for Mr. Wilson, |
| 15 cartridges.         | Uganda.                  |

All his provisions and all his cartridges were gone, but what was most trying of all was the loss of the quinine. Without this medicine he knew it was useless for him to attempt to go on. When he was considering how best to get out of the difficulty, a caravan came up and encamped close by. The leader was an Arab trader from Unyanyembe. He was very courteous, and gave Mackay a good dinner, and presented him with a packet of candles and a box of matches.

That little bit of kindness helped to give him courage to start again. He and his men took the desert by easy stages. But it was a trying place to be in. Mackay knew that robbers kept hovering about his camp, and he felt too weak to defend himself. The C.M.S. had sent a gold

watch to the native Governor for his kindness to Lieutenant Smith ; he placed it in his pocket, and kept a sharp look-out in the direction of their other gift—a very fine Arabic Bible.

How he missed his quinine ! Shivering and shaking, he soon felt unable to carry his rifle. He was sure he was ‘in for fever.’ He had been on half rations for several weeks, and now, coffee, tea, sugar, and salt were done ; it seemed as if he could never reach Uyui. Just then—it was often a case of ‘just then’ with Mackay—he met a large caravan with more than a thousand porters carrying ivory to the coast. The leader was an Ujiji Arab who knew Livingstone and Stanley, and esteemed them highly. Mackay, he found, was a friend of these two men, and he gave him the present of two fowls.

At last Mackay caught sight of the chief’s village at Uyui. He had formed a very high opinion of the old man, because

of the position he took up with regard to the slave trade. A few months previously he had purchased two hundred slaves who had been brought to Unyanyembe for sale, and immediately after doing so set them all free.

This action made him many enemies, and Mackay, being his guest, was associated with the old man by the hostile Arabs, and thwarted by them in his attempts to get provisions for Wilson and himself. He wrote to Zanzibar—he always did when in a difficulty :—

‘ When on the way here I heard from Wilson that he was short of stores, and as Uyui is only a day’s march from Unyanyembe I went over there to get a few things. To save a multiplicity of accounts for little things I first bought a quantity of satini from an Arab named Jedid, giving him a bill for the amount to be cashed on the coast. Thereafter I exchanged some of the calico with other merchants for a little tea, and coffee, and soap, etc. I had also my loads packed and most of the porters engaged to carry them to the Lake.

‘ Meantime came a letter from the English

Consul to Abdullah bin Nassib—a low half-caste slaver, and true blackguard—to the effect that no Arab was to sell me any goods, or in fact to any “msungu” (European) without an order from him, else they would lose their money !

‘ I had stored the goods in the house which the ex-Governor—Said bin Salim (Lieut. Smith’s friend)—had left in Unyanyembe, while I lived four miles away with Sheik Thain bin Abdullah. In the early morning, before I could be there, Abdullah bin Nassib forced open the house of Said bin Salim and took away the C.M.S. property, without sending me any word. When I came and found what had taken place, I went to Kisessa’s (nickname of Abdullah bin Nassib) to ask back my bill, but he refused to be seen. To make a long story short, I did not get my bill back till after three and a half days—a most fatiguing bother.’

‘ 16th May 1878.

‘ Now I have returned to Uyui on the way to the Lake for which I start (D.V.) in two days. But in consequence of the Consul’s order, and Kisessa’s malicious execution of it (he put me in mind of the jailer at Philippi), I am without a single yard of cloth, without any coffee, or tea, or sugar, or anything else—in fact, in simply what is absolute want. It is not much that I use on the march for myself, and I might do

without even an occasional cup of coffee for a few months, but I am at a loss as to how to feed the few men with me.

‘ Said bin Salim has been turned out of office by a clique of slavers whose traffic he had endeavoured to stop. That clique has Kisessa as its head, and he has sent lying reports against the rightful governor. Said bin Salim, you will remember, was the Arab who chaperoned Burton and Speke on their first journey, which led to the discovery of the great Lakes. He had been very kind to Lieut. Smith, and since to Wilson, and now to me. He naturally feels it that the British Consul should now patronise his enemy Kisessa.’

Mackay wrote letters at Uyui, and found others waiting for him. One of the latter brought the news of Tytherleigh’s death :—

‘ Poor fellow,’ Mackay wrote on 16th May, ‘ if the news is true, I shall miss him very, very much. He was invaluable to the Mission, and to me.

‘ Now, it is useless my going on, as there is no one to bring on our goods, and Wilson and his men will die of starvation. I shall therefore try to get an Arab here in whom I have confidence to go to Kageyi and look after the goods there, while I return to Usagara to bring relief. Per-

haps I may go to Zanzibar. It will depend on what news I hear from you, and from London. I must have the court affair settled, yet I cannot let Wilson starve, and it is difficult accomplishing both, with such distances between, and such slow means of motion.

‘It is a most disastrous Mission ours, and my present complication only adds to the difficulty. But the great matter is to support Wilson where he is if possible, and not lose the little ground we have gained.’

On 27th May 1878 a letter came confirming the news of Tytherleigh’s death.

‘You will have been vexed, with myself,’ he again wrote to Zanzibar, ‘at the death of my dear friend Tytherleigh. I shall miss him much. He was my “big brother” in all cases requiring strength, of which, the Consul says, I have so little. I feel not a little consoled that Dr. Baxter was with him in his last days. His complication of diseases I cannot understand, as he seemed to be always in health, except that he was fond of swallowing pills. It is a great loss to the Mission, and Sneath I fear will find it hard to fill his place. It will, I fear, be long before I hear the Society’s mind on the gap caused by the removal of our two first men,



Lieut. Smith and Mr. O'Neill. I must be content to do the best I can till then.

‘Your kind advice to exile myself in the interior for a year I should be glad to obey—and much longer. . . .’

This is the only hint of the sort of advice given Mackay by Dr. Robb, his Zanzibar friend and counsellor. It was as if he said, ‘Go and show the C.M.S. the mettle you are of.’ And Mackay did it.

## VII

### TRAMPING ON

MACKAY had many a weary day's tramp after he left Uyui. His socks were worn out, and his heels were blistered, but as he went on he forgot the pain. He came to places that reminded him of Scotland ; true there were jungly bits, but there were also ' clachans ' of a kind, the smell of cattle, and of fresh green grass, and he remembered the great draughts of milk and the chunks of cheese he used to get at Annie's home. Perhaps he only imagined it, but the people seemed more than usually friendly, yet he could not ask them for a drink of milk. About half-way to Kageyi he came to a beautiful pastoral country, which terminates in the Victoria Nyanza. From the summit of one of the weird grey rocks characteristic of the district he looked abroad upon what

seemed a boundless horizon. For the time being he was in Aberdeenshire—the past terrible months a dream. His father—the learned geologist—was beside him ; to him he spoke as he wrote :—

‘ As one goes farther north, a strange sameness characterises the whole, low rocky eminences being met with at every mile, and all bearing east and west. Even in the Lake itself the system is continued, for the Island of Ukerewe is really nothing more or less than one of these parallel sierras. . . . All the country is granite, generally grey, beautiful as ever an Aberdonian quarried in the hills of Woodside or Bucksburn. Now and again, where the feldspar predominates over the quartz, blocks are found of a reddish tint, very much like the product of Peterhead.

‘ These sierras I have already alluded to are a series of piles of mighty boulders crowning low downs of sand, and covered generally by a scanty vegetation. The mighty granite masses are no glacial boulders, but relics of a higher land that once stood a couple of hundred feet above the present general level. Here and there a solitary monolith is all that remains, but generally there are great piles of rock, towering one above the other, as if some African Titan had been playing at building strongholds but his masons struck

before a single one of the walls was complete, and now the whole are in ruins. On the face of these rocks one may almost trace the movements of the hand of Time, as each boulder shows round its base a family of fragments, some detached centuries ago, and others with all the appearance of having come away but yesterday. As rain and sun combined to break up the larger masses, so these powerful forces are ever acting on the broken pieces, grinding them down to form the loose sand, or rather coarse gravel, of which all the soil is composed, and slowly but surely reducing the whole country to one unbroken plain.

‘On the day the bottom of the Nyanza sank, and another country north of Uganda became still more depressed, the great lake that covered Usukumu discharged its contents to produce seven years’ plenty in Egypt. The mighty reservoir then contracted into what we call the Victoria Nyanza, and no wonder that the diminished supply which the Ripon Falls could yield was looked upon as a time of famine in the land of corn. The emerged land got by and by saturated with showers, and the surplus water found its way to the Lake and hence to the mighty river, and now the equilibrium is restored, and the Nile rises yearly as in former days.’

He walked on again—up hill and down dale, crossing streams, passing through villages. Still the cattle were to be seen, and the good-natured country people. But he never lingered. He had been in touch with Infinite Greatness, and was in a fit mood to get a first glimpse of the great Lake. He remembered well reading with his father, in the *Anabasis* of Xenophon, the story of how the ten thousand Greeks shouted *Θάλασσα! Θάλασσα!* As he gazed on the silvery Lake he felt as if he were shouting with them. Had he not been two years and more on the way from the coast to Kageyi? And now, alone, he was still able to say, ‘I will hold the fort till better days dawn.’



PART FOUR  
THE MISSIONARY ENGINEER

## NOTE

*Buganda* is the native name of the country.

*Muganda* means an inhabitant of the country.

*Baganda* is the plural of Muganda.

*Luganda* is the language of the people.



# I

## HE MEETS AND CONQUERS KING LKONGE

MACKAY reached Kageyi on 13th June 1878. Kaduma, the chief, received him and his party very kindly, and showed them where the Mission property had been stored. It had been plundered by both freed and runaway slaves from Zanzibar, and now was piled in heaps—an extraordinary jumble of stuff. ‘There were boiler shells and books, cowrie shells and candle moulds, papers and piston-rods, printer’s types and tent poles, carbolic acid, cartridges and chloroform, saws and garden seeds, travelling trunks and toys, tins of bacon and bags of clothes, pumps and ploughs, portable forges and boiler fittings—here a cylinder, there its sole plate, here a crankshaft, there an eccen-

tric.' 'A terrible arrangement,' Mackay called it.

He at once set about reducing things to some sort of order, and at the end of ten days the change amazed himself. The rain-gauge was cleaned, books no longer filled the boiler shell, the engines for the steamer were complete to the last screw, the boiler was ready to be riveted, tools and types had separate boxes, and rust and dust were thrown out of doors. It seemed a miracle that so much of the splendid outfit supplied by the C.M.S. remained entire; and Mackay marvelled that Lieutenant Smith and those who travelled with him had, amid most trying difficulties, been able to bring so many articles of value such a distance.

But the poor *Daisy*! It had been built by Mr. O'Neill and been of great service on the Lake. Now she was in a sad condition—not a plank sound. As she lay on the beach, the sun had played havoc with the exposed parts, and white ants with the rest.

It seemed a hopeless case, but Mackay resolved to do his best for her.

He visited the grave of his beloved friend and comrade, Dr. John Smith. Alongside of his was that of Barker of Stanley's expedition ; and, standing there, he resolved to raise a tombstone to the memory of the two martyrs, Smith and O'Neill.

Then he sent a message to King Lkonge, Chief Kaduma acting as interpreter from Swahili into the language of Ukerewe. ' Tell the king,' Mackay said very slowly and deliberately, ' that I wish an interview with him. If he is afraid to come to meet me, let him know that I am not afraid of him. If he fears I will shoot him, I will leave my rifle and revolver here ; and instead of taking my own boats and servants, let him send a good canoe with his men for me.'

Mackay liked the people of Kageyi. He noticed interested faces as he used the turning lathe, or melted down the fat of an

ox and turned out candles. Again and again he heard the remark, 'White men come down from heaven.' He picked out a few of the more intelligent of the men and taught them the use of various things ; then he tried to impress upon them that they could learn all that white men knew. 'White people,' he said, 'were once savages, and carried bows, and arrows, and spears. But when God began to teach them, they became different.'

Sunday came round. Down went Mackay's tools. 'Why?' He showed them his Bible and said, 'It is God's book, and He commanded a day of rest.' They understood Swahili a little—enough to be able to grasp what Mackay meant. 'Did God write it?' they asked. Mackay believed that the right answer for them was 'Yes'; and he gave it. Then they said they wanted to learn to read, that they might know the book God Himself wrote for them. The white man spoke the truth, they could tell by the look of

him. God had given him a message, and he wanted them to know it.

The children gathered about him, especially the boys. They kept crowding round, eager to get a chance of helping. It was counted a great honour to be asked to bring a live coal to light his pipe. And Mackay dreamed of the day when the rough work of pioneering would be over and he could settle down to teach the children every day, and be able to watch them grow in the fear of God. Then—a training college. Some of them might by and by become teachers—perhaps missionaries.

His thoughts often went back to the time when Lieutenant Smith was an arm of strength to the Mission. The last letter he had from him was written on 5th December 1877. He and O'Neill were starting for Uganda that day. What befell them after that he only heard from survivors of the battle.

The dispute, he had been assured, was

entirely between Lkonge and a half-caste, Songoro, from whom Smith had bought a dhow, which went to pieces on the rocks before the fighting began. The heathen chief found out Songoro to be a rogue and determined to kill him. Songoro then ran to Smith and O'Neill for protection. Smith refused to give him up, and thereupon was attacked by a large force of the natives. It was a terrible tragedy.

After a week or so the canoe arrived from Ukerewe. It brought a deputation consisting of Lkonge's uncle and a dozen of his headmen. They begged Mackay to return with them. To test their sincerity, he asked that the headman of the deputation be detained as security for his life. But he was considered too important a councillor to be absent from the interview. Then Mackay suggested that three of the others should remain as hostages. This was agreed to. But as Mackay saw that they meant him no evil, he said he would not demand the pledge. So they embarked

and set off together. Mackay's men strongly urged Mackay not to go. They were sure, they said, that Lkonge meant to kill him. He was a noted poisoner ; no one escaped him. They begged to be excused from going ; they said they were afraid. Mackay told them that he knew they were cowards, and that if an attempt was made to kill him, they would all run off and leave him to his fate.

Mackay trusted Lkonge, but with reservation. He left his arms behind him, but he put some sulphate of zinc in his pocket in case he should require an emetic !

He drew the best out of the heathen chief. Neither he nor his people, Lkonge told him, had any desire to kill the white men. The Arab Songoro was false, he said, and had been arrested for debt. In trying to escape with Smith and O'Neill he was attacked by the Ukerewe men, when he shot two of them. Lkonge said he had given orders to bring the white men to his house, that they might come by

no harm. They did not, he said, seem to understand, or they suspected treachery. At all events they fought on the side of Songoro, and their ammunition failing, they were overpowered.

Mackay told the king that he believed his story, and had come a long way to hear it, that he might write it down and send the news to England. He said that he could not tell him what the Queen would say, but that he himself was friendly.

‘I asked him,’ Mackay wrote home, ‘if he wished me to bring two of my white brothers to teach his people to read and write, and to know the word of God. He begged me to do so, asking if God had come down amongst us. I told him he had, and that we would teach him what God taught us.’

Mackay’s natural astuteness comes out in what follows. ‘But I warned him not to mix up white men with Arabs lest they might get killed, and our Queen might send a few field-pieces against him, and



he would lose not only his houses, but his head also. I told him the terrible tale of Ashantee, and was struck with the very attentive ear he gave to my narrative. (He understands a little Swahili.) ’

The visit ended by Mackay presenting him with a dressing-gown, and the slaying of a goat between them, sealing the African bond of blood-brotherhood.

## II

### CROSSING THE LAKE

ONE day Mackay thought he saw smoke over the Lake. It was like a cloud. Then, after a little, he heard the sound of two shots, and he thought he could distinguish canoes in the distance. Was it possible they were coming from Uganda ?

Wilson, at his solitary post, had heard of Mackay's arrival at Kageyi, and he was crossing the Lake to meet him. When at length he reached Kageyi, we can believe that the two shook hands in silence, but in the evening they talked on and on ; they were so glad to be together that they could not think of sleep.

When the *Daisy* was launched the first time after being repaired, she leaked ' like a sieve.' ' Try again ' was one of Mackay's

motatoes, so he uncoupled the worst section, and got some of the natives to carry it up into the village where, under the shade of a large tree, he repaired it most thoroughly, a crowd of interested on-lookers watching every operation. Many chiefs from the neighbouring districts came to see the white man and his 'big canoe,' and it generally ended in their making 'brotherhood' with him.

On 23rd August 1878 Wilson and he set sail for Uganda; but on the fifth day a terrific storm arose suddenly, and the *Daisy* was again shattered. 'For half an hour we did our utmost to keep the vessel afloat, raising a false splash-board with sails, and trying to keep the ship's head to sea. One tremendous wave made the bowsprit dip under the anchor chain, when away went the bulwark on the weather side, and the next sea came bodily into the open boat. Our crew became panic-stricken, and refused to render any assistance, and nothing remained but to

try to save our goods by drifting ashore at Busongora.'

The little vessel was so damaged that for the third time she had to be shortened. It was like making a pair of shoes out of a pair of long boots. Mackay cut eight feet out of the middle of her, bringing stem and stern nearer together, patching up all broken parts in these with the wood of the middle portion. The natives of the place were friendly, and not only built huts for the protection of the C.M.S. property, but sent some men with their only canoe to Uganda, to ask Mtesa to send on some canoes to carry the remaining goods which the shortened *Daisy* could not accommodate.

'God must be in the air' was a common remark from the natives who hovered about the camp. They thought that the knowledge of such wonderful things could only come from heaven.

Things that revolved interested them most. 'Every day they see more

wonders,' Mackay wrote. ' We grind our corn with a revolving hand-mill ; we sharpen our tools on a revolving grindstone ; we produce blast by a revolving fan ; we turn round articles on a revolving lathe ; we clench articles firmly by a revolving screw ; we bore holes by a revolving brace and bit ; and we fasten screws into the boat by a revolving screw-driver.'

It took eight weeks to put everything right with the *Daisy*, and then they launched her once more on the Victoria Nyanza.

They reached Ntebe, the port of Uganda, on 1st November 1878. The natives paddled out to meet them. They beat their drums and sang. To Mackay it was a good welcome ; he felt it was worth all the trouble he had encountered on the way.

The men did not seem to him like savages. They were dressed with a piece of reddish-brown cloth, which was knotted on one shoulder. Wilson told him that

the cloth was made from the bark of a tree, which was removed by working a blade under it and then peeling it off. Afterwards it was beaten with mallets until it became as thin as paper. The more common kinds of bark-cloth were of a light brown colour, but the better sorts, when properly finished—dried in the sun—became a rich terra-cotta shade.

They had a walk of twelve miles before they reached the mission-station. To Mackay the road seemed a very good one, after the sort of tracks he had been accustomed to. It was uphill all the way, but that did not matter ; it led to the little mission-house that he believed was going to be his home. It was a quaint little hut of plaited reeds, and its thatched roof rested on what seemed a perfect forest of poles.

### III

#### MEETING WITH KING MTESA

MACKAY had still Stanley's picture of Mtesa in his mind, although Wilson must have told him many things that might have seriously damaged it. Word was sent to the mission-house that the king could not give the missionaries an audience immediately. After two days, however, a message came. Wilson and he were to proceed to the palace at once.

They set off, burdened with the presents Mackay had brought. The wide sweep of road, the beautiful lane, with its fence of tiger-grass on each side, the little white-robed pages who kept panting up one after the other in quick succession, saying ' Jangu ' ( ' Come ' ), or ' Yanguyako ' ( ' Be quick ' ), until they reached the royal

gateway—the whole made a perfect panorama. There seemed no end of gateways, and courts where crowds of people of all shades of complexion walked about. Some of them seemed to be very important personages indeed. Two specially attracted Mackay—the ‘Keeper of the Palace,’ and the ‘Chief Judge’ or Chancellor, generally called the ‘Katikiro.’ He thought either one or the other must be Mtesa.

A tattoo of royal drums, accompanied by a loud blare of trumpets, summoned the crowds to the king’s ‘levee.’ The missionaries followed in the rear. When the general company entered the doorway of the house where Mtesa was, they found seats where best they could, but stools were brought for Mackay and Wilson to sit upon. The king lay reclining upon a low couch beneath a shabby canopy of bark-cloth. He was clothed from head to foot in a snowy white robe, and a long black coat embroidered with gold braid.



He bowed slightly, placing his hand upon his heart.

Mtesa took a very deliberate survey of Mackay, gazing at him intently for quite ten minutes. Mackay was equally interested in the king. They looked at each other in dead silence. To the European the back of any black man's mind is pretty much a mystery. Mackay, however, felt sure of one thing. Mtesa was unhappy. He thought that while there was a certain strength expressed in his face, it was overbalanced by weakness. He made up his mind that when he came to know Mtesa he would have a straight talk about religion with him, and the New Testament would be his text-book.

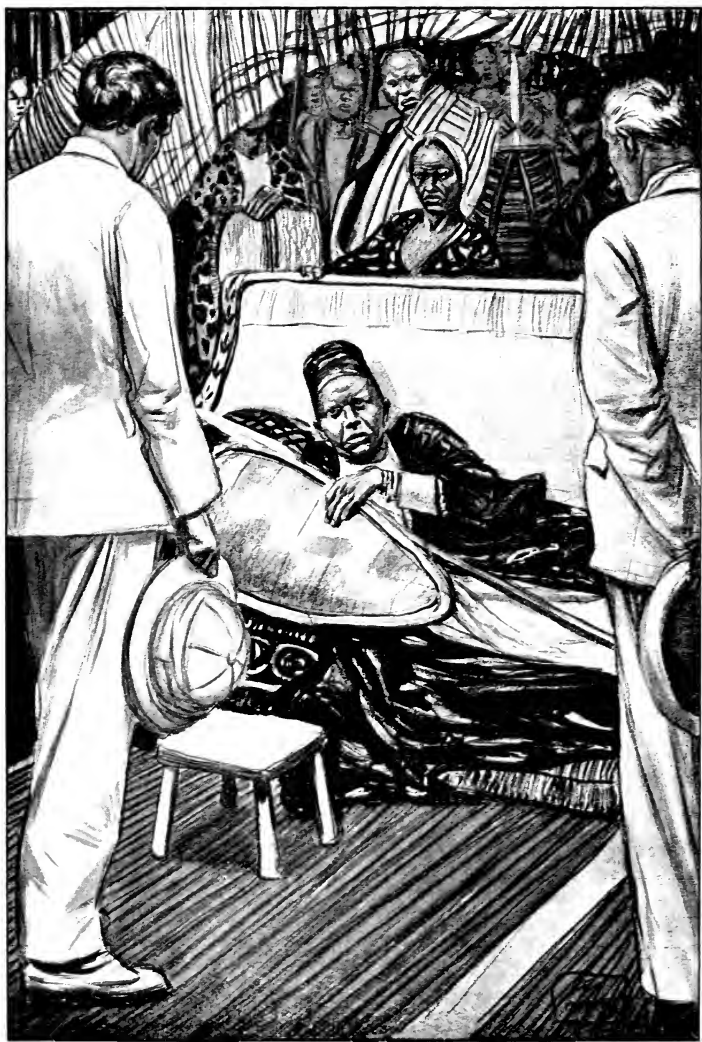
If during the ten minutes Mtesa thought at all, it was in a lazy, sickly sort of way. 'One of Stamlee's men. He is going to make things. He will teach too, but I will send him much that needs to be mended.'

The missionaries and he talked together

a very little, then they presented their gifts. One was a musical-box, which was set to play 'The Heavens are Telling.' Mtesa grew weary; he said he felt ill; they had his permission to go.

When they left, immediately the whole court rose and followed them down the hill. Mtesa had felt satisfied with the interview, however, for in the evening he sent them ten fat cattle and a man's load of tobacco as a present.

Mackay soon became a great favourite with Mtesa and his court. Things that wanted repairing were showered upon him, and they marvelled at the burnished face he could put upon metal goods. The native smiths could make things like hoes, and hatchets, and spades; they could also make knife-blades of a kind, but they knew nothing of the art of 'tempering.' They were sure that witchcraft was at the back of Mackay's success. How the natives chattered and looked at each other when they saw him send a log along the



MTESA TOOK A DELIBERATE SURVEY OF MACKAY, GAZING AT HIM  
INTENTLY FOR QUITE TEN MINUTES



road by rolling it ! Once he rolled some logs up an inclined plane, and in a few minutes he was being followed by quite a crowd of people crying, ' Makay lubare ! Makay lubare dala ! ' ( ' Mackay is the great Spirit ; he is truly the great Spirit ! ' )

Mtesa surprised Mackay with his intelligence ; he seemed to be able to understand anything if it were properly explained to him. One day he described railways and steamers to him, and said that ' seventy years before there were no railways ; now there 's a network of them all over the world. ' Then he explained about the telegraph, the telephone, and the phonograph, and having such an interested listener, he ventured to go a little deeper into the subject. ' My forefathers, ' he said, ' made the wind their slave, then they chained the water, and now even the lightning is the white man's slave. ' The king's look, that said, ' Tell me more, ' was the best reward Mackay could have wished for.

Another time he took a book on physiology with him to the palace. He also showed diagrams illustrating the circulation of the blood. The book proved practically useless for Mackay's purpose, but the diagrams gave him an opportunity of speaking about the perfection of the human body. The slave question had been much in his mind. 'No man,' he said, 'nor all the men in the world, could make such a body; and yet the Arabs want to buy a human being with a cake of soap.' Mtesa was present. The argument went home, and he said, 'From henceforth, no slave shall be sold out of this country.' Mackay told him that he never made a better decree in his life.

On Sunday a flag was hoisted on the palace hill, and Mackay was asked to hold a short service. He told the king and his court the simple story of the Gospel. Then he invited questions and free conversation on the passage read. Great eagerness was shown by Mtesa, his chiefs,

and the young men. Mtesa was so struck with the explanation of a passage that he remarked to the people, 'Isa (Jesus), was there ever any one like Him ?'

Mackay's first Christmas service came round. The chiefs were in 'extra dress,' but the story of the birth of Christ was told 'as to a little child.' When he finished, they asked him to tell more ; so he spoke of the dignity of work, and of Jesus' thirty years' life at Nazareth.

In his log book there is an entry early in 1879: 'Every day I am learning to admire this people more and more.'

## IV

### INFANT TEACHER AND LEARNED MAN

MACKAY knew how to teach. 'I find the teaching I received at the Free Church Normal School of the greatest value in this respect. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Dr. Maurice Paterson and his colleagues of Moray House for what I learned there. . . . The people here are not savages, nor even barbarians ; they are exceedingly neat-handed, far more so than the coast people, who call themselves alone civilised. It is indeed a great step in advance that was taken by the Free Church in the case of the "Livingstonia Mission," and by the C.M.S. in our case, to make missions in Central Africa industrial. The African has never shown any capacity to grasp the unseen *per se* ; he requires something tangible, practical.'



Coming out of his little mission-house after having been teaching reading by the 'look-and-say' method to both grown men and little boys, or preparing type sheets in the Luganda language, he looked abroad upon the country with the eyes of a man of learning and sane judgment. Already he had a railway scheme in his mind:—

'Uganda is out of sight the finest part of Africa I have yet seen. . . . The country is really a rich one, and might produce anything. Cotton, coffee, tobacco are indigenous. Every stone is iron, and kaolin is in inexhaustible quantity. This kaolin—a stratum of white clay below the red clay—will prove of great value when the country becomes open to trade. . . . I should fancy this would be excellent land for growing tea and quinine, and many other valuable articles, but until there is some proper means of access to the country, the soil, and its many products must be idle. Only English enterprise can overcome the difficulties, although one great step is gained when we make the natives themselves alive to the importance of a good road. I fear animal power of any kind will never be available in Central Africa from the

presence of that fatal fly, the *tsetse* ; but in these days of steam we need not fold our hands. I hope soon to show what can be done in that way, though on a small scale ; for there are several articles of steam machinery belonging to the Mission, and when I have these at work we have the power to produce more, and on a larger scale.'

No wonder his smithy became a very popular resort. There was a forge, an anvil, a lathe, and a grindstone in it. Both chiefs and slaves crowded the place. The cyclops blower and a turning-lathe were great marvels, but the grindstone created the greatest interest of all.

One Sunday the king was present at the service. There was deep interest shown, and Mackay felt that the people understood, as he explained the failure of man to keep the commandments of God, and the way of salvation through Jesus Christ, who not only loved God with all His heart, but loved man so much as to die for him. Mtesa was greatly struck with the idea, so much so that he turned and said to one

of his courtiers, ‘ This is truth I have heard to-day. There can be only one truth ; you cannot say there are twenty *mani* in a *frasilah* if there be only twelve. Your religion is different from the truth, therefore it must be lies.’ He spoke of the persecution which he must endure from Egypt by becoming a Christian, but saw that persecution was the cross of the Christian. In the afternoon he sent the present of a goat to Mackay, with the message, ‘ It was a blessed passage you read to-day.’

## V

### A DISTURBING ELEMENT

Two Mission reinforcements were on the way to Uganda. The first was to arrive by the Nile. Mtesa was very suspicious of Egypt and Colonel Gordon, and the Arabs did their best to make him more so. They told him that the Nile party were coming as political spies—emissaries from Gordon—and that the Turks would follow and ‘eat the country.’ Mtesa sounded Mackay on the subject.

‘When Speke came he brought Grant,’ he said, ‘and then sent Baker. Colonel Long came, and then Stanley. When this party arrives there will be five white men in Uganda. What do they want? Will they bring gunpowder?’

‘I don’t know.’

‘Will they bring beads?’

‘ Not likely.’

‘ What will they bring ? ’

‘ I cannot tell.’

‘ Are these fellows not coming to look for lakes that they may put ships and guns on them ? ’

In February Mtesa received some Arabic letters containing gossip about the new party. In a tone of relief he said to Mackay, ‘ Their guns are only muzzle-loading.’

On the 14th the three arrived, and next day went to the palace to present their presents, with which Mtesa was delighted. They also presented a letter from Lord Salisbury expressing friendship to Uganda.

The five were breakfasting at an oval table which Mackay had made by screwing the two bulk-heads of the *Daisy* together and mounting them on six poles stuck in the ground. They liked the table ; it suggested King Arthur and his knights. They were a happy company that morning.

News was brought that two white men had arrived at Ntebe in a canoe. They

proved to be two Romish priests, sent from Notre Dame d'Afrique Society. Mackay could not feel glad. When the whole continent was open, why had these men come to a place where a Protestant Mission was just started? Mtesa was only beginning to get a grasp of the Gospel idea; it would be impossible for him to judge wisely or correctly between *creeds*. Mackay was right. Mtesa became both confused and puzzled. The Arabs from the coast had already settled in Uganda, and they were Mohammedans. Three religions! How was he to choose between them?

Much trouble followed. More priests arrived, and brought beautiful presents to the king. One Sunday was a memorable day to Mackay. He taught a class in the morning, and when the midday service began, was asked by the chancellor to come forward and read. The priests were present.

Before beginning, Mackay turned to one of them (M. Lourdel), and said, 'We

are going to pray ; perhaps you will kneel with us.'

M. Lourdel said he did not understand, nor would he understand when told by one of the others in Swahili. So Mackay went on, and was not interrupted by the padres, beyond hearing one whisper to the other '*Pater Noster*,' as he was reading the Swahili version of it.

When he commenced reading 'Ye know that after two days the Son of Man is delivered up to be crucified,' Mtesa stood up and said very abruptly to one of his courtiers, 'Ask the Frenchmen if they do not believe in Jesus Christ ; why don't they kneel down with us when we worship Him every Sabbiti ? Don't they worship Him ?'

M. Lourdel spoke. The drift of his excited talk could be gathered by Mackay from a mixture of bad Arabic, Swahili, and French.

'We do not join in that religion because it is not true ; we do not know that book

because it is a book of lies. If we joined in that, it would mean that we were not Catholics but Protestants, who have rejected the truth. For hundreds of years they were with us, and now they believe and teach only lies.'

The king translated to his court.

Mackay was asked what he had to say. He presented the case for the Protestants as calmly as he could, trying to smooth matters by saying they had one belief in many things—one God, one Saviour, one Bible, one Heaven, and one law of life.

But M. Lourdel would have no terms of peace. 'There was *one* truth, and he came to teach that, and we were liars !'

When the king asked Mackay to answer he stood up and told him how the 'truth' stood, and advised Mtesa to hear more of the doctrines of the Frenchmen. He had little fear, he said, of a man of his intelligence being able to come to a right decision.

Mackay went home with a heavy heart



when he thought of the trouble now begun. But he knew it was a battle for the truth, and that the victory would be God's. He meant to fight on and for 'Christ the sole head and His Word the only guide.'

## VI

### ECHOES FROM THE MKUNDI RIVER

THE position of the C.M.S. missionaries became an almost impossible one, and Mackay came in for a heavy share of the troubles that made it so.

On 18th April Mackay in his trouble turned to his kind old friend, Dr. Robb. He seemed to have misunderstood an expression used by Mackay in a previous letter:—

‘ Please, my dear Sir, do not look on my foolish letters too hardly. I did not mean anything bad by calling your advice *kind*. You have acted most nobly on my behalf, as I hear from all quarters, and I feel most grateful.

‘ It would be a very long story were I to give you even a sketch of our troubles during the last three months. I hear that the men with my letters from Kageyi (date *Aug.*) were murdered in Ugogo, so my last has failed to reach you. . . .

‘ All was going on smoothly when I was here alone for three months. Wilson had gone north to meet three gentlemen. The king and chiefs were great friends with me.

‘ About 14th Feb. ’79, the brethren (Pearson, Litchfield, and Felkin) arrived. They brought a good present for Mtesa, and a letter from Lord Salisbury expressing friendship to Uganda. Then the Jesuits turned up. We tried to get the king to send them away, and he promised to do so. Then we heard that he meant to have them all stop here. We next threatened to leave as we could not work with these fellows. But Mtesa would not allow us. We next tried to get fairer terms on which we would consent to stay, viz. *liberty* to go about, and a sufficient supply of food. These we have not got. Then came two men from the Consul—at least they said the Consul sent them—Kacheche was the head man. Kirk’s letter then undid all the good we had done, and nearly cost us our lives. He said that we had got no connexion with the British Govt. whatever. That may be true enough, but the Arabs and king interpret that to mean that we are not British subjects, and that we are runaways. They do not of course understand the British Constitution. They came to the conclusion that Lord Salisbury’s letter never came from the Queen, in other words that

it was a forgery. Many troubles followed and we have had a most anxious time, and are practically prisoners.

‘Wilson and the rest are determined to leave, but they cannot get off. They are now contriving secretly to inform Col. Gordon of our state, that he may send an army to release them.

‘Stokes and Copplestone arrived a fortnight ago. Since then the king has been somewhat more favourable. . . . From the small turn things have taken I mean to do my best to be on good terms with the chiefs, believing that thus alone will we ever succeed in getting a fair footing for the Mission. Stokes and Copplestone are of my mind, but the rest are determined on leaving. I feel such a step precipitate. The Mission here is only a day old practically, and it is absurd to expect everything smooth for perhaps years to come.

‘The C.M.S. as soon as they heard that a warrant of arrest was out against me sent me an order recalling me. They had no account from myself then. By and by they got my journal which, they say, explains everything, and saying that they in similar circumstances would have taken just the steps I took. Yet they say that “in case the story should get public, they, *to save themselves*, feel bound to let me know that I am under recall.” But I could not leave however much I should wish to obey

the summons. The king is determined that I shall stay with him.

‘For myself, I feel it my duty to stay on while I am spared. To desert the post when the others leave, and just as the Jesuits are beginning their evil work, would be to look back after having put my hand to the plough.

‘Tact and patience, I believe, will overcome much difficulty. I wish there were more of it among us. . . .

‘By the way the Consul has sent up a letter to me addressed to the “Agent of Seyid Burgash in Unyanyembe,” stating freely that a heavy charge was against me, but that H.B.M. Consul had consented to our paying \$200 in compensation, and that I was thus now free of the charge. He did not say anything of that in his letter to Mtesa. I can make no use of the Consular letter, however, even should I go to Unyanyembe, for there is just the same inconsiderate statement in it as in the letter to Mtesa, which will give Kisessa to understand that I am not a British subject. By the way, what has British protection done in the case of our poor brother Penrose? (Murdered.) Stokes has sent you an account of that.

‘We are seven here now, but I fear we are too many to work sweetly together with no authorised or acknowledged head. There would

be any amount of work to keep all hands fully employed, if all cared to be energetic. But young fellows get easily discouraged, and men that do not wish to stay have little heart for doing anything.

‘ I firmly believe that it is chiefly because I cannot fall in with the Society’s policy of romance in jumping into Uganda at all hazards, that they write me that my *temperament* is not such as they think the right one for a missionary in Africa. Their policy I have always maintained would cost much life and more money without achieving anything real for many a day.

‘ But I am sick of the matter, as I am sure you are also by this time. God alone can and will keep us under His protection.’

Is it to be wondered at that when, in his next letter, Dr. Robb told him he was starting for Aberdeen, he wrote back saying, ‘ I wish I was just now as near the Brig o’ Dee as you.’

## VII

### ‘THE ANTI-MUKASA’

HE spent his birthday—13th October 1879—carving wooden types for making reading sheets. ‘This is my birthday,’ he wrote in his journal, ‘and I find I am now thirty years old.’

His pupils increased in number every day, and, as in all schools for beginners, some learned slowly, some quickly. Early on Sunday morning, 19th October, he had one of the chiefs reading the Swahili Scripture lessons, and all afternoon visitors thronged the mission-house, some reading St. Matthew’s Gospel, and others spelling out the reading sheets. Occasionally he took some of these to the palace. Mtesa was delighted, and distributed them among his chiefs and others. Mackay discovered that he had had the Swahili service written

out on boards in Arabic characters ; but now he ordered the boards to be laid aside that they might learn to read the printed alphabet.

Mtesa could not but be impressed with Mackay's earnestness, and he admired the way in which he used the Scriptures for the confirmation of his own arguments, even when the arguments were directed against himself. But Mackay had more hope of the success of his work in the mission-house than of that in the palace.

'I have had many opportunities of reading the Scriptures at court,' he wrote to Dr. Robb on one occasion, 'and every Sunday, with few exceptions, I have had a short Swahili service at the palace. But I do so only until we learn the language, as the common people know no Swahili, and it is for them our Gospel must really be.

'It is well to have the opportunity of teaching a little of the truth to Mtesa and his chiefs, but I never look for the country becoming Christian through them. Yet



that is the idea in the "Royal Geographical" and other home circles. They talk of a nation being "born in a day." I wish it were so light a work. Well, we must patiently teach, but only the power of God can make them learn. I wish I could see some real result of all that has been taught here in the last seven months, and by Mr. Wilson for great part of a year before I came. Yet there must come results in time.'

Superstition was proving a curse to Mtesa. One Sunday when Mackay went to the palace to have a service he never saw him. It was said that he was having an audience with a few of his chiefs. Mtesa had been ill, and they were deciding whether Mukasa—the *lubare*, or Spirit of the Lake—was to come to see him, or Mtesa be carried to see Mukasa. The chiefs felt sure Mukasa could heal him by a single word.

On the following Sunday Mackay read a new prayer, asking God to overthrow

every device of Satan and every usurpation of omnipotent power by a wizard, that all men might know that Jehovah was God alone. With the assistance of his pupil-teacher he translated it into Luganda. When it was read in chapel there was breathless silence, and 'Amens' from every direction followed.

Mukasa, however, was in every one's mouth, and all sorts of presents were being sent him by the king. One morning, after a couple of hours' teaching in the workshop, Mackay went to court alone. Discussion was already started. After an interval of silence he stepped forward and sat down in front of the king. He said he wished permission to ask a question.

'Say on,' Mtesa answered.

'What is a *lubare*?' Mackay asked.

The question took all the men by surprise and some were displeased.

Mtesa, however, took the question in good part. He went on to tell a very confused story about how certain people

were able to hold converse with the departed spirits of his ancestors, or they might be themselves possessed of certain other spirits. Mukasa was the chief of these. He had come to be the *lubare*—the god of the Lake—who was propitiated every time a long voyage was taken. Mackay told the king that he had no belief in the power of such a pretender as the *lubare*.

'I sit before you,' he said, fixing his earnest blue eyes upon the king, 'your servant, and the servant of Almighty God, and in His name I beg of you to have no dealings with the *lubare*, whether a chief tries to persuade you to do so or a common man advises you.'

The king caught Mackay's meaning at once, and translated his words to the court. He said he intended holding a council of his chiefs with a view to coming to some resolution on the matter. Mackay said that now was the time, for if he did not believe in the *lubare*, he would easily bring

the chiefs to see the absurdity of his claims.

Mackay went on to say that the *lubare* was practically causing rebellion in the country, for he disobeyed the king's orders and asserted his right over the Lake as before that of the king. He reminded him how he (Mtesa) had ordered some of his Arab traders to go to Usukuma, yet these traders were never able to start because of the counter-orders of Mukasa.

Then Mackay produced his Bible, and was prepared to show him that both in the Old and New Testaments sorcerers were ranked in the lowest scale of iniquity. Moses commanded them to be put to death, and even in his own country—Scotland—in past times they were put to death. Christians did not now, he said, take such extreme measures, but he believed that such people, if they would not obey orders to cease their deceptions, should be sent to prison. Mukasa, as the *lubare*, was a liar and a rebel.

Mtesa seemed rather to enjoy the whole thing, and translated everything to his court, summing up thus : ' If Mukasa is a god, we have two gods ; if he is a man, then there are two kings here.'

Back Mackay went to his workshop and his pupils. He had to wait for Sunday before he had another chance of opposing the evil that was threatening his religious work at the palace. Again it was God's Word that he used as a weapon—the laws of God to Moses, the story of Saul and Ahaziah, the case of Elymas the sorcerer, the works of the flesh contrasted with the fruits of the Spirit, and the list of those who may not enter through the gates of the Heavenly City.

The chiefs seemed to be ashamed of their belief in Mukasa, and Mackay had a talk with several of them, and explained how even the chosen nation fell into idolatry, and by and by God caused them to cease to be a nation at all.

But in spite of the missionary Mukasa

conquered. Houses were built within the palace court for his accommodation. Still Mackay persevered. He visited first one and then another of the chiefs whom he believed to be open to conviction, and he paid another visit to the palace, hoping to get a straight talk with the king.

He squatted like a tailor on the floor beside the chiefs and Arabs. M. Lourdel was seated close beside him, and Pearson on a stool behind. Mtesa saw that Mackay meant business ; he ordered all music and noises to cease.

‘ Is it now your wish that I should cease teaching the Word of God at court on Sundays ? ’ Mackay asked.

‘ No, not by any means,’ Mtesa answered.

‘ You intend to bring one whom, just the other day, you acknowledged to be a deceiver. I have no right to interfere with your guests, but this visitor is no ordinary person ; he is looked up to as possessing powers which belong to God alone. We cannot mix the worship of

God Almighty with the worship of a man—the enemy of God.'

Mtesa was all attention. 'You hear what Mackay says? He says we cannot bring the *lubare* here without offending God.'

'He is only coming with medicine,' said one of the chiefs.

'But,' answered Mackay, 'the *lubare* is not merely a doctor; he is looked up to as one who could heal by wizardry—by enchantment.'

Mtesa knew Mackay was right, and said so.

Mackay said further that they would all be delighted if Mukasa could heal the king; neither he nor any one else would object to his bringing medicine for that purpose.

'What you say, Mackay, is perfectly true,' said Mtesa. 'I know all witchcraft is falsehood.'

Again taking his stand upon the Word of God, Mackay told the king that the mere fact of his encouraging an impostor would

have the effect of confirming the faith of the people in something he—according to his own confession—did not believe.

With Mtesa it was a simple case of ‘I don’t know what to do. My mother believes in the *lubare*,’ he said, ‘so do her friends. It was they who wanted him brought here.’

Mackay was loth to believe that Mtesa would decide for the sorcerer, but he knew the chiefs were all in his favour. Mtesa by himself was powerless.

A few days later Mackay was sent for by the king. An aunt of Mtesa’s was there, and the chiefs. The latter talked a great deal, and it became evident to Mackay that the king was abjectly afraid of them. In a little while he stood up and announced that he had decided to give up both the Arab’s religion and the religion of the white man, and would go back to that of his fathers.

Then they all turned upon Mackay, and asked what he came to Uganda to do.



He said that he came at the request of the king to Stanley to send men to teach the people about God. Mtesa said that he understood Stanley's men were to teach them to make powder and guns. Mackay answered that they did not understand that. Their first work was to teach the Word of God. 'But,' replied Mtesa, 'if teaching is your main work, we want no more of it. We want you to work.' Mackay said he had never refused to do any work the king had asked him to do; and he held up his hands, blackened by working at the forge every day for the very chiefs who were opposing him. They wanted no more teaching, they said. They only wanted work for themselves and the king.

'If you wish that,' said Mackay, 'we cannot stay. We came for no such purpose.'

'Where will you go?'

'We will go back to England.'

'I do not feel discouraged,' he wrote home, 'only disappointed. No power can stand against that of the Cross of Christ.'

## VIII

### HIS FRIENDS IN ADVERSITY

‘ WE came with the book of the Revelation of the love of God to men in our hands, and we try to teach its glorious precepts. One day they listen, and another day they say, “ We want none of your teaching ; we have a religion of our own, which we like better than the white man’s religion. If you want to teach us anything, show us how to make gunpowder and guns, and we will give you land and slaves.” Thus up and down and in and out flows the tide. One day we are friends, the next day the enchanters prevail and we are condemned as the cause of all drought and disease. But still clearly shines the morning star, the sign of the gospel of peace.’

So Mackay writes in June 1880 to his

father from Uyui, whither he had gone for supplies. The letter he sent to Zanzibar reads as if he felt he was having a good talk with a chum on all sorts of subjects—a talk that did him good :—

‘ There has been a great reaction here (July 1880) against our work. The king and court have decreed to have nothing more to do with either the Arab’s religion or with the white man’s religion, but that they will return to the creed of their forefathers, which is a worship of witchcraft. This is a disappointment indeed, but I look upon it as a hasty decision, and not as a law of the Medes and Persians.

. . . . .

‘ I asked you before to send me a copy of your report on the meteorology of East Africa when published. I have kept a register here for over a year now, six sets of observations daily. I have not yet tabulated the results for the present year, but when you see them, I think you will pronounce the climate not so bad on the

whole, *i.e.* apart from the never-ending bogs. I wish they were peat bogs—in every hollow.’

A feeling of home-sickness often came over him. What with the treachery of those he wanted to help, the position that he, as a mechanic, had to take in the Mission, and the want of sufficient food, it seemed as if everything were going against him :—

‘ Our expedition has been too juvenile in its members. Our reinforcements from the north consisted of young fellows from the C.M.S. College who find more to try their patience than they looked for. It is by a strange working of Providence that all who were to be my assistants in practical work have come to grief. James and William Robertson were the first, and now where? Then I got Sneath, and Tytherleigh, and Burton. Burton returned at Southampton. Poor Tytherleigh is not with me now, and Sneath has twice tried the tropics in vain. Then I begged a good fitter to help me in building a steam yacht. A capital man was found in Penrose, but I can only mourn his premature end like my old mate Tytherleigh. I wrote to London asking that Coplestone

should come on in place of Tytherleigh. He got an order to come, but got no instructions as to what he was to do when he came ! He could not therefore fall in easily with our plans here.

‘ Mr. Pearson (our head) and a young fellow named Litchfield (in full priest’s orders) are all now here besides myself. None of them knows any Swahili or Luganda, although they have picked up a little Arabic in coming here.

‘ I have done a good deal in the way of teaching to read, and have found the lads make rapid progress. Now I must devote myself almost wholly to building, etc., as Litchfield’s proper department is teaching.’

And he harks back to the tragedy of the Mkundi River :—

‘ Stokes told me how very much you did in my behalf in that case. I feel more than grateful to you for it. Mr. Brown and Sneath also met our Nile party at Suakim, and they told our men how nobly you had defended me in the Zanzibar court.

‘ In accordance with a letter written by the Consul, messengers reached Uganda some months ago with letters containing a terribly exaggerated account of my misdoings. *Inter alia*—I had starved my men, and then shot and killed sixteen of them ; that henceforth no Zanzibar man

would travel with a European ; that I was too bad to be fit to live, etc. Mtesa himself told me all this.

‘ I do hope that Zanzibar will again be your destination. It will be a comfort to think of you there again so near us. You will have heard that Gordon Pasha has gone home after withdrawing all stations near Uganda, so that the Nile route is now closed until some other enlightened governor like Gordon comes out to open it. Your new route via Tanganyika, Nyasa, and Kilimane will probably be a fact in time, but from Uganda not yet.

‘ I came to Uyui merely to go back at once with a small caravan of stores as we were quite out of supplies in Uganda. The Jesuits are quiet, and externally friendly, but full of intrigue as usual. They have started a new station at Uzongora between the Lake and Karagwe, to which latter place we hoped to go soon. The last party of them has lost terribly in numbers by death. One of them was murdered also on the way from here to the Lake.

‘ After having been a good month in frail canoes from Uganda to Kageyi, we reached the latter place just a few days after the last French party had arrived from Unyanyembe.

‘ There were two padres and an “ Auxiliary ”

(a frère ?) The last was a Scot ! from Aberdeen !! by name Charles Stuart !!! And what a woe-begone fellow for a countryman of ours. He and the padres did nothing but lie on their backs all day except to get up for meals, when they swallowed greasy compounds of soups and salads and complained all day of gripes.

‘ Poor Charles Stuart (of Blairs <sup>1</sup>) ! I could ha’e forgien him a’ his popery, but to hae forsaken his parritch, that is unpardonable.

‘ All three seemed hasting on for what Ch. Stuart himself called “ Kingdom come.” I could not but pity them. They have been terribly fleeced also on the way, besides having lost all their porters at one place.

‘ Before I left Uganda, I had made fair progress in reducing the language and had made some attempts at translation.

‘ I had got more than the half of St. Matthew translated, and only wish I were back at my post to go on, for this horrible “ pagaazi ” work is far from what I came for. I am taking back plenty of type to go on with, but must leave my fine Albion press here until Stokes brings up cloth to pay porters to take it on to the Lake.

‘ You are of course aware that Lord Salisbury telegraphed a year ago to Dr. Kirk to send at

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<sup>1</sup> Roman Catholic College, near Aberdeen.

once to Mtesa to explain the erroneous impression caused by his (Kirk's) letter to Uganda in spring of 1879.

‘ But we have far higher “ protection ” than that which comes from Zanzibar, and thank God that has never failed us yet. We have endured much, but He has never failed us, and never will. I feel secure in such hands, and the peace that gives I cannot measure.’



## IX

### DARKNESS, AND SIGNS OF THE DAWN

MTESA was a strange mixture. He had none of the qualities of real kingship ; but, as in Humanity at its weakest, there could be discerned in him the germ of something that might be helped to grow into goodness, if not into nobility. Stanley thought he had got into touch with it ; he saw dignity—even power—in the African king's countenance ; and for a little while Mackay in his enthusiasm hoped for great things in Uganda under Mtesa's influence.

But his eyes were opened. Mtesa had suddenly thrown off the mask of a seeker after God, and Mackay recognised the barbarian pure and simple.

The plague broke out in Uganda. It entered the royal palace, and several of the king's wives died within a few hours.

Like the cowards they were, Mtesa and his chiefs disappeared from the palace and settled on a hill at a safe distance.

The two missionaries had a hard time. They had not only the plague to contend with, but Mtesa. The *lubare* had not cured him of the disease from which he suffered, and he was ready to listen to any advice given by those about him. Some one succeeded in convincing him that the most efficacious cure would be a great slaughter of human beings. Mackay heard this, and it made him very sad. He writes :—

‘For days the dozen or more executioners, each with his gang of twenty or thirty men, have been lying in wait for people on the roads. Bakopi, or common people, only are caught, while sons of petty officers or chiefs, if caught by mistake, can generally purchase their release by a goat or a cow. The other night, five were suddenly apprehended at our own gate; two days ago the executioner went to catch men on another road, as it got noised abroad that he was catching every one that passed this way. People who had gone the other way to avoid

this one thus fell into the trap, and by evening Sabata (the executioner) had captured forty men and thirty women.

‘Several days will elapse yet before the slaughter takes place. Some will have their throats cut, while others will be tortured to death—their eyes put out, nose and ears cut off, the sinews of their arms and thighs cut out piecemeal and roasted before their eyes, and finally the unhappy wretches burnt alive. . . .

‘The wretch who orders all this to be done for his own gratification is he who is called in Europe the “enlightened and intelligent King of Uganda.” It is he who professed to Mr. Stanley to be converted to Christianity, whom the Romish priests write of as being a good Catholic. It is he who says that we Protestant missionaries are mad because we deny the use of worshipping the *lubare*; while I am especially mad because I told Mtesa that he was merely *playing* with religion in professing himself one day a Christian, another day a Mussulman, and the third a follower of his old superstition. . . .

‘Mtesa is a pagan—a heathen—out and out. All the faculties of lying, low cunning, hatred, pride and conceit, jealousy, cruelty, and complete ignorance of the value of human life, combined with extreme vanity, greed, and absolute want of control—all these seem not

only to be combined but even concentrated in him. All is *self, self, self.*'

Mackay and Pearson made up their minds to write and expostulate with him. They based their requests to desist on (1) The sin of breaking God's commandment—'*Thou shalt not kill*'; (2) The imprudent policy of such an act; (3) On his faith in the ancient superstition that Kintu, the founder of Uganda, disappeared because the land had become so full of blood.' They also sent a letter to the Frenchmen, asking them to join with them in trying to prevent such a dreadful act taking place. Nothing came of either of their letters. The massacre took place.

At this time the missionaries were virtually prisoners, 'fleeced of everything, reduced not only to beggary, but to temporary starvation.' This was chiefly due to the enmity of certain Arabs directed against Mackay. Some of the C.M.S. brethren at Mpwapwa had relieved these Arabs of a gang of female slaves; and as

Mackay had come by the way of the East Coast he was supposed to be under the wing of the Consul, and consequently condemned as being a spy on them. Then he was the only missionary who could address the king and court in a language they understood, and because he spoke against murder, slave-raids, and the blackest of sins—of which he knew they were guilty—he was branded as a disputer and ‘raiser of rows.’

His burden would have been wellnigh unbearable but for the advent of a new worker in the Mission—the Rev. Ph. O’Flaherty. The unusually breezy tone of a letter written to Dr. Robb (April 1881) in the very midst of his perplexing trials is doubtless due to his influence :—

‘Stokes arrived a few weeks ago and is off again. Pearson is having a trip on the Lake which will suit him better than being pent up here on dry land. Wilson was to get married soon, when I last heard, to a “lassie of 18 summers.” He has accepted a “chapel of ease” at home, so he is not on his way back. Felkin

was to be soon married too, and probably he will not come either. Litchfield is at Kageyi, but I fear will not stay long there either.

‘At present Rev. Ph. O’Flaherty and myself are alone here. Mr. O’F. was an old soldier, having been in Crimea and Delhi. I enjoy his company very much, and find in him a companion much more suited to my tastes than any of the young fellows who preceded him. He is 48 years old, and has a wife and eight of a family! . . . I am ordered on for another spell here—perhaps a couple of years—nor can I see my way to leave yet, even if allowed.’

Pure water was beginning to be scarce near the mission-house. Mackay examined the hole where he, O’Flaherty, and all the natives in the neighbourhood obtained their supply. He saw that to get sufficient he would have to dig to an almost impossible depth. But on taking levels with the theodolite, he discovered that he could reach water at a convenient spot by sinking sixteen feet. He made men dig a hole eight feet by four feet square. When they got too far down to be able to throw up the clay, he arranged a pulley and

bucket, and kept hoisting it up until they reached water, which they did at the very depth Mackay said it would be found. He repaired a battered pump which he had bought in London, and to the amazement of the natives they saw a copious stream of water ascend twenty feet and go on flowing as long as they worked the pump handle.

Their excitement knew no bounds. 'Makay lubare! Makay lubare dala!' they cried. But he told them there was only one great Spirit—God—and that he himself was just a man. He explained the action of the pump to them in companies; some understood best when he said it was a sort of elephant's trunk made of copper; others when he told them it was 'a beer-drinking tube on a large scale, with a tongue of iron that sucked up the water as their tongues sucked up the beer from their gourds.

'Oh, eh, eh, Makay is clever, clever,' they cried, and danced about like over-

joyed children. 'The king will get them to carry him here to see this wonderful thing.'

Mr. O'Flaherty astonished the natives still more by telling them that Mackay could bring the very Nyanza itself up to the door of the palace, with all the fish and canoes as well !

A month or two afterwards Mackay got a little note that pleased him greatly. It was written in Luganda by an old pupil and assistant, with a pointed piece of spear-grass, and ink made of soot and plantain juice. The words were :

*'Bwana Mackay, Sembera has come with compliments, and to give you great news. Will you baptize him, because he believes the words of Jesus Christ ?'*

And writing to his father on 1st April 1882 he says: 'On the 18th of March Mr. O'Flaherty baptized five of our first converts—all young men who have been under careful instruction for some time, and who have long been eager for baptism.



May they have your prayers that they may stand firm in the faith amid the great heathenism around, and that they may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of God's most Holy Word, which can make them wise unto Salvation.'

## X

### LAYMAN VERSUS CLERGYMAN

‘THE work of translating the Scriptures is going rapidly forward,’ Mackay wrote in April 1882, ‘while our own knowledge of the language is increasing. But a layman is at a great disadvantage in a mission. It is, of course, expected that preaching, teaching, and translational work form the chief and peculiar employment of the ordained missionary, however qualified another may be to do such work. But secular work must also be done by some one; and if, meantime, I must be employed chiefly in that, I have no right to complain, “for the body is not one member, but many.” ’

To his friend, Dr. Robb, now in Surat, India, he sent a letter in August :—

‘Mr. O’F. and myself continue to plod on here. We expect a reinforcement when Stokes returns.

But many have started from Zanzibar for Uganda before now, and all have not reached, while almost all who did come here soon set about conjugating the verb *σκεδάννυμι*.

‘ This Mission has suffered much in that way, for there is work enough here for all who came and many more. There are five R.C.’s here, and they expect more of their “*confrères*” this year. I fear that we shall have trouble yet from that quarter. Meantime they are outwardly friendly, as they find it their interest to be.

‘ Pleurisy is a very common thing here, and seems generally to terminate in an abscess or death. I have cured several cases of it, and of the “*plague*” too, with aconite tinct. Probably more would have recovered if I had been able to keep away native druggers and charm workers. Only, what is more probable still, and as doubtless your verdict will be, they would have all recovered if I had only let them alone.

‘ Can you not send us up country a doctor of some experience? Some of the undergraduates sent out as medical missionaries don’t meet the requirements of the case. I am sorry to have taken a prejudice lately to the “*Medical Missionary*” representative. On the other hand,

I have the greatest respect for *Medical men*. Only, if we had more fellows of the stamp of Dr. John Smith, I would not complain, whatever he might be called. I am of opinion that it will take the best man "all his time," (as they say in Scotland) to be a good doctor, letting alone other mission work. That is why I am suspicious of the semi-medical, semi-theological men sometimes sent out. Of one thing I am sure, viz. that a skilful surgeon and good doctor would secure a lasting fame here, and command the highest respect.

' But I don't know why I am bothering you with all this nonsensical scribble. It is not for me to put my profane hoof within the sacred precincts of the Medical School, for, as Stokes says, "Mackay is only a fitter!" I have been just chatting with you as to an old chum. You will be patient of my twaddle, I know.

' I do not know if I shall not get by and by restive under the present order of things. I have now been some seven years in the employment of the C.M.S. In mission work there is in one sense no promotion, yet there is in another. A Mission like this must always have its *lay agent*, and it is questionable if the work of that official is not of considerable influence among the natives, after its kind. But it is not so regarded by many both at home and here too.

Among natives, the man of books and words is the gentleman, while the man of tools is the slave. There are only these two classes.

‘ Were I to return to England, I don’t think I would willingly go abroad again without first taking orders. Not that I put any intrinsic value on that process, but one can have enough of it if he is not ranked among the “ padre Sahibs.” I have a hankering after graduating at Cambridge yet, and am meantime getting lessons in Hebrew from Mr. O’Flaherty, who is a crack hand at that, as well as at various of the Oriental languages.

‘ I am busy making the doors, windows, and furniture of a new house which I have built for Mr. O’F. I have finished the “ but ” end where he can stay meanwhile with some comfort till the “ ben ” is ready. As a substitute for glass, I have made the windows of wire gauze. It answers admirably. Solid plastered walls, with panelled doors and locks, give quite a civilised effect compared with the hut of wicker work which I inhabit myself. I am building a regular fireplace with a long “ lum ” to suit, as the rainy days are generally chilly, and I think the smoke should find other means of exit than through the door ! What astonishes the natives most of all perhaps is the *upstairs*, and the staircase itself. They never saw anything of

the kind before. I have made and burnt several thousands of bricks, just of the common red earth found everywhere under the soil. They withstand the weather very well when thoroughly burnt. I have seen no trace of lime in the country, but I do not despair of finding such a treasure yet. The last news that I have from Kageyi is that an Arab who has settled there has found limestone, and has burnt a good quantity. The job will be to get it brought here.

‘ I have sent canoes to Kageyi for the remaining pieces of our steam engine, and when it comes, which I hope it will do, in spite of the seeming determination of the Arabs to keep me from getting it at all, I hope to rig up a steam saw-mill and cut timber enough to roof a house and make a boat into the bargain. I mean then to put the engine into the boat and thus command the Lake.’

## XI

### A NEW AND STRANGE EXPERIENCE

NAMASOLE, the queen-mother, died of typhoid in 1882. The drums were beaten at the palace to frighten away the King of Terrors and escort the departed spirit into the unseen world.

When, the morning following her death, Mackay and O'Flaherty went to pay their respects to the king, they found all the chiefs with their hands clasped above their heads, roaring and shedding tears.

Mtesa asked Mackay how royalty was buried in England. Mackay said they had three coffins, the inner one of wood, the next of lead, and the outer one of wood covered with cloth. The custom with the Baganda was to wrap the mummified body in several thousand bark-cloths until it was just a huge heap, and then bury it

in a great grave, building a house over it. But Mtesa wanted the three coffins, and asked if Mackay could make them. He said he could if Mtesa would provide the material. Mtesa told him that he had no lead, but plenty of copper trays and drums if he could make a coffin out of that. Everything must be as big as possible he said ; and there arrived at the Mission all sorts of brass goods, bronze trays, Egyptian copper drums, copper cans, copper pots, plates, etc.

‘ Impossible ’ was no word of Mackay’s, and he set about making the best coffin he could out of this jumble of stuffs. The copper had to be beaten out ; when that was done, there was only enough for the lid and ends of the coffin ; but he and O’Flaherty brought sheets of copper from the Mission for the rest. Mtesa was greatly pleased with the result, and gave the two missionaries ten head of cattle on the spot.

The grave was a huge pit—twenty feet



by fifteen feet at the mouth, and about thirty feet deep. It was dug in the centre of the late queen's sleeping house. A great deal of gravel had to be carted away, and then the pit was lined with bark-cloth. Several thousand new bark-cloths were thrown in and spread over the bottom ; then the sides of the great outer box were carefully lowered, and Mackay went down and nailed the corners together.

He saw the dead queen placed in the first coffin, the ladies of the court meanwhile yelling with all their might, while a few succeeded in shedding tears. The coffin was then filled up with finest Manchester shirting and calico. Mackay screwed the lid down ; the ladies kept hugging the coffin, and it was very difficult for him to get near enough. Next came the copper coffin. They lifted the other into it with a huge sheet, and as Mackay riveted the lid down and snapped the nails with pincers the chiefs said, ' He

cut nails like thread,' 'Mackay is a proper smith.'

The copper coffin with its contents was lowered into the deep grave, and thousands of yards of unbleached calico were filled in round and over it until the big box was about full ; the lid was then lowered, and Mackay descended to nail it down. Mr. O'Flaherty and he calculated that about £15,000 worth of cloth was used for the queen's burial. 'What a waste!' they said.

Mtesa's head blacksmith had taken a liking for Mackay, and he invited him to come to the mission-house to have a talk. He listened hungrily to the story of the Gospel as Mackay told it, and then he said, 'How is it that when we were making Namasole's coffin you told me none of these good things?' This man grew to be a 'splendid Christian.'

Mackay's life in Uganda was many-sided ; sordid one day, and full of rich experiences the next. A few months after

his experience as an undertaker, there came to him, as from heaven, a great friendship—a love like that of Jonathan for David. The Rev. R. P. Ashe, M.A., joined the Mission in 1883, and thus describes his meeting with Mackay :—

‘ I reached Entebe 28th April 1883. . . . Just as the sun was setting on the second day after my arrival, as I sat in a temporary grass-built hut, I heard the crack of two rifles, and running out saw a number of people approaching, a white man walking in front. “ Bwana Makay amekuja ! ” ( “ Mr. Mackay has come ! ” ) shouted my men, and soon I was shaking hands with Mackay himself. It is difficult to give cut and dried descriptions of people without descending into the female modern novelist style. But bright, frank, fearless blue eyes looked the hearty welcome spoken by his lips. His face was handsome, and what was better, good and clever. In stature he was small—the only thing in which he was small.

‘ I was soon to put his kindness to a severe test, for I had hardly completed the thirty-mile journey to the mission-house at Natete when I had a bad attack of malarial fever. As I lay and watched this stranger wait on me, and nurse me hour after hour, I wondered at his tender-

ness ; for I had somehow been led to believe that I should find him perhaps a little hard. How thoughtfully, unselfishly, and thoroughly he did what he undertook ! and this noble sense of duty was the key to his character.'

Mackay had to leave Ashe in a few months' time and go to the other end of the Lake to put a boat together that had been brought up in pieces from Zanzibar. He romances over the expedition in a letter written to Dr. Robb in a very boyish mood after the task was finished :—

' I am glad to have a "chum" even so far off as Surat. Were I down the way of the coast I even think that I would be tempted to run round your way were it only to see you for an hour between the *whiles* of your professional duties. Perhaps you could put me up, at any rate, for one night in the district jail if you have any special apartments for Zanzibar outlaws. . . . But promotion follows promotion, and I fully expect that you have taken the good lady and family to fresh quarters. I miss now the chance of mail-men bringing me up nice packets of goodies from her hand.

' But I must be content with my pipe and

black chaps for chums, as long at any rate as the C.M.S.—that august body—keeps me here.

‘ This time two years ago we got notice of the approach of a “clerical party” coming to our aid. Stokes brought them up country, the whole five of them + one “drilled mechanic” (the C.M.S. called him so although he was a tin-smith). They brought out a boat with them in planks, rather *after* them, meaning to cross the Lake in it. But perhaps they lay under the sweet hallucination that this boat would by some magic spring together of itself. At any rate they left it lying under the sun a dozen miles from the Lake at a place called Msalala in the extreme north of Mirambo’s territory. They should have stayed there, but instead, knocked about by Kageyi, etc., nearly a hundred miles off, till they spent all their barter goods. Their leader—Rev. J. Hannington, M.A., Oxon.—took seriously ill and returned. One of the Uyui clericals went to the coast with him (Blackburn). The other clerical (Edmunds) left at Uyui. One clerical—Rev. R. P. Ashe, M.A., Cantab.—came on alone to Uganda. Rev. Gordon and drilled mechanic Wise remained at Kageyi, while the poor boat’s planks lay splitting in the sun at Msalala.

‘ Then came your humble servant to the

relief of the relief party. I got some canoes, and fetched Kageyi last July. I found Gordon and Wise just starting for the Isld. of Ukerewe, where Smith and O'Neill fell. After knocking about for a month looking for a station, I took them to the head of the long creek called in the maps "Jordans Nullah," meaning ultimately to station them where they ran away originally—at Msalala.

' After much ado with the savages, I got the poor planks to the waterside, and there I set to work to build the boat. Wise helped me for a month, and I was glad of his assistance. I then let him go with his clerical brother to commence building at Msalala. I remained alone with the boat, *i.e.* with two or three Zanzibar braves who could lift a log and let it fall too, but were of little other use. After a hard struggle with frames and planks, all twisted and warped with 18 months under the sun, I had her ready for launching just two months after the day I laid the keel down.

' I then fitted her ready for sea ; got a cargo of boxes of provisions for Uganda on board, and set sail. Boat-building was entirely a new job to me, and sailing newer still. But nothing venture nothing win. If a chap is to be Jack of six trades, he might just as well be of seven. I cut right across the Lake with fair weather but bad winds,

and after a week's run reached Uganda, thank God, a few days before Xmas. . . .

' Perhaps I should add as a piece of information of mighty importance that this vessel is a common open boat—not unlike a herring-boat cutter built. I fitted a small poop into her, which you may call, out of politeness, a quarter-deck. She is all mahogany in her planking, with frames and floors (*i.e.* ribs) of oak. She carries two big sails and two jibs, and is seated for twelve oars.

' I have a very ragamuffin crew of various tribes, Wangwana, Baganda, Banyoro, and Wanyamwezi. Somehow or other we get her to go in spite of compass, and steering, and taking the sun, log and lead—I don't mind half a gale of wind, but chronic calms try the patience, especially when grub runs short and one has to go ashore for more.

' Painted white, however, and with braw new sails, and a red cross ensign (of my own make), even you fastidious Anglo-Indians would not perhaps object to an hour's sail in her. Were you here, you might at any rate make sure of my bringing out the very best of the *ship's* stores to whet your appetite. You could count on cleaner water, and plenty of it, than the best to be had in Zanzibar.

' Mr. Ashe you would find a man to your

mind, as he is a confirmed anti-alcoholist (hydropot) and anti-tobacconist.<sup>1</sup> Of late too he has become a rigid vegetarian. But the other day he consented to take some anchovy sauce with his boiled plantains. . . .

‘Mr. O’Flaherty is still in Uganda, as full of life as ever. He and Ashe both come from the rebel Isle, while your Aberdeen servant represents the C.M.S. afloat.

‘Thomson of the R.G.S. is also, or should be, somewhere on the Lake or near it. I see in the *Sept. Geog. Magazine* that he was travelling among the Masai. I hope they won’t eat him. There was a German traveller—Dr. Fischer—in the same quarter ahead of Thomson. The latter was not a little incommoded by Fischer’s high-handed dealings with the natives. May he come better off than poor Penrose did in the wake of Abbé de Baize. . . .

‘Many best remembrances to Mrs. Robb and to your whole family. The word seems strange to me, a bachelor in my 35th year. Good-night.’

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<sup>1</sup> Mackay himself was a strong advocate of total abstinence.



## XII

### DAYS OF PERSECUTION

WHILE the presence of loving and sympathetic friends reawakened the boyish nature once so noticeable in him, the man born of adversity was growing in strength every day.

His return to Uganda was made a time of great rejoicing. How the Mission party hailed the beautiful boat with its supply of stores, letters from England, good news of Gordon and Wise from the south of the Lake, and — Mackay ! His presence brought brightness with it. There did not seem a cloud in the sky that Christmas Eve.

‘ We three,’ writes Mr. Ashe, ‘ Mackay, Bwana Filipino, as Mr. O’Flaherty was always called, and I, were surrounded by a band of eager learners, desiring on the

morrow to make their confession of Isa Masiya (Jesus Christ). Right nobly would some of them cling to Him, not reckoning life itself dear in His cause. There was "Mukasa" to lay aside that name for ever, and to be known henceforth as Samweli; there was young Lugalama and Kakumba, soon to taste a fiery death; there was Bwana Filipo, a little later to die on board ship in the Red Sea, in sight of Africa, obtaining a better rest than that of an English home; and there was also Mackay, to suffer a few more years of hope deferred, to see a few more of his plans foiled, to find more and more the weakness of men and their insufficiency, to wax mightier by his trust in God, and to climb to a sublime height of clear faith in Him and belief of His final and complete victory.'

But days of sadness were not far off. King Mtesa had not been well for several years, and in October of 1884 he died. The missionaries felt very anxious about the future, for he had shown himself, in the

main, their protector, and while cruel, showed many fine qualities, and was undoubtedly a man who would fain seek after better things. His son Mwanga, a lad of about seventeen years of age, was chosen as his successor, and very soon showed himself in his true colours—an enemy of the Mission.

His enmity reached a crisis when on one occasion Mackay was about to start for the south of the Lake in the *Mirembe* with letters for Europe. Mr. Ashe and two boys were accompanying him to the port. After walking for about three hours, they were suddenly confronted by a Mohammedan chief—Mujasi by name—with a band of armed men, who shouted to them to go back. Mackay sat down on the side of the path ; Ashe did the same. They were dragged to their feet and ordered to march. Mackay said, ‘ If you want me to go back you may carry me.’ Three or four of them seized him and carried him. He had the presence of mind to snatch the

caps off the nipples of a couple of guns which his captors were wildly waving about, and this they magnified into an attempt to shoot Mujasi. After a while they set him down, and he and Ashe walked back towards the capital.

Mackay tried to bribe Mujasi to allow the boys to go, for meanwhile they had been seized and bound. But Mujasi would not listen to him. They were marched to within about a mile of the mission-house. Immediately they went straight to make a complaint before the Chief Judge; but Mujasi had been there before them, and he would do nothing—in fact, he ordered them to be bound and bundled out of the country. They were hustled out of his presence, followed by an angry crowd quarrelling for their clothes. Through it all Mackay never lost his presence of mind for a moment.

Fortunately the chief executioner appeared and drove the mob right and left, shouting that the missionaries were

to be unmolested. They went home in peace, but torn with anxiety about the boys.

Days of still greater darkness followed. They told their pupils to flee, and it was well they did it, for soldiers were sent to search for pupils, and Mujasi had made up his mind to burn them all.

Both Mackay and Ashe tried sending presents to Mwanga, and begging for the release of the two boys, Kakumba and Lugalama. But they and a young man—also a Christian—were burnt to death. Some one said that in the fire they sang in Luganda, ‘Daily, daily, sing His praises.’

‘Our hearts are breaking,’ Mackay wrote in his journal. ‘We are lonely, deserted, sad, and sick.’ Yet he strengthened those about him. Mr. Ashe writes of having an ‘overburdening sense of intolerable wrong.’ And he goes on: ‘I can hardly find words to say what Mackay was to me then. My one overmastering feeling was that I would go and

shake the dust from my feet. "Not so," said Mackay, "there is work for you to do," and we set to work printing prayers and hymns and reading sheets. Thousands of sheets were set up and struck off, and soon the storm blew over, and we were so full of work as to have scarcely time for grief, if that had been possible.'

They heard that Bishop Hannington—the first Bishop of Uganda—was coming to pay them a visit, and they wrote warning him of the dangers of the Busoga route. There was a legendary prophecy that when Uganda became subject to a higher power, the invaders would come by way of Busoga. But, unfortunately, the letters never reached the Bishop. As he had previously let the missionaries know that he meant only to come as far as the eastern shore of the Lake by land, and then cross to Uganda by water, they told Mwanga so. But he had changed his mind.

Word reached the king that two white men had arrived in Busoga, and more were

following with a caravan, and he decided that they should be killed. Mackay and Ashe could do nothing. Mackay, however, when he heard of the Bishop's arrest, did not hesitate to go straight to the king and ask for news of the prisoner; and although every day he expected to be summoned forth to die, he went about his work as if nothing were the matter.

A message came from one of King Mwanga's sisters—a Christian—that 'if ever they needed to try to please the king, it was now.' Mackay and Ashe made up as large a present as they could afford, and next day there came a long letter demanding Mackay's presence in the royal enclosure.

'We knelt to pray,' says Mr. Ashe. 'Mackay's prayer was very childlike, full of simple trust and supplication. Very humble, very weak, very childlike he was on his knees before God; very bold, very strong, very manly afterwards, as he bore for nearly three hours the brow-beating

and bullying of Mwanga and his chiefs. Once only did his Highland fire flash out, when Mwanga said, " Makay oli Mukasa ! ' (" Mackay, you are a hypocrite ! ") " I am no hypocrite," he replied in anger. " Hush, Mackay ! " I said in English, " do not answer him." The interview turned out a farce instead of grim tragedy, for Mwanga suddenly shouted, " Give these two white men a couple of cows to quiet their minds," and the ordeal was ended.'



### XIII

#### FURTHER PERSECUTION: MANY CONVERTS

‘ THERE is no doubt at all now but that King Mwanga has murdered Bishop Hannington and his whole party of porters,’ Mackay wrote early in December 1885.

A few months later the Bishop’s journal came into their hands, and Mackay, by getting into touch with the keeper of the king’s stores, succeeded also in securing his writing-case, which contained the diary he had never ceased writing while he lived. ‘ Tell the king that I die for Buganda ; I have bought this road with my life,’ were reported to have been his last words. It was a matter for thankfulness that Mr. O’Flaherty received permission to leave the country ; the strain was proving too much for him.

It was a time of great perplexity with Mackay and Ashe. They heard of plots that meant death.

‘At this period I was very much with Mackay,’ says Mr. Ashe, ‘and learned to know many of his opinions. . . . Mackay’s leanings were politically to the Liberal side, though the theory advocated by some persons calling themselves Liberal that England should confine her interests to her own shores found no favour in his eyes. Especially did he deplore the then Government’s Egyptian policy, which resulted in extinguishing in the Soudan the faint light of civilisation which was snuffed out with Gordon’s death. It grieved him to think so much money and so many lives were lost and that no result was allowed to accrue from it. . . . He felt that, humanly speaking, the Christians in Uganda could not hold together against the weight of heathenism and Mohammedanism without some other power, such as a trading company, which would be on the side of order. And it was the knowledge of this feeling which made me so strongly advise him to take service under the Imperial East African Company, and which made him willing at least to consider the question of doing so. I think that we both felt that many of the directors of that company were full of zeal for

the extension of Christ's Kingdom, and were obviously not hampered by many considerations which a missionary committee is obliged to take into account. Mackay would never, on any terms, have ceased to be a missionary of Jesus Christ. . . .

'General Gordon, who could see those noble qualities in Mackay which shone so illustriously in himself, some years previously offered him a high position in his service; but Mackay did not accept it, preferring to do his work for Africa in a position—from a worldly point of view—far more humble and insignificant than that which Gordon could have given him.

'He was not afraid of the opinion that believers in Jesus should stand by one another, to the very utmost of their ability. He saw no reason why a Christian nation—except its heart be eaten out by selfishness, and pride, and disbelief in any higher motive for action than self-interest—should not say to a chief like Mwanga, "Cease from murdering your Christian subjects or we will take you away.' "

In June 1886 a fresh persecution broke out against the Christians, and they were murdered right and left. 'These Christians are disobedient, and learn re-

bellion from the white man, I shall kill them all.' So said Mwanga. Immediately a terrible massacre was started. Thirty-two were burnt to death by Mwanga's express orders. These made a noble confession, praying to God in the fire, so that even the head executioner reported to the king that he had never killed such brave people before, that they died calling on God. Mwanga laughed and said, 'But God did not deliver them from the fire.'

Yet, on the 25th of July the baptismal register recorded two hundred and twenty-seven names. That night fifty converts assembled at midnight, and two elders were elected.

On the 3rd of August Ashe and Mackay went to the palace to ask the king for permission to leave the country. After some preliminary business Mackay went forward. He knelt down at the edge of the king's carpet, and asked for canoes that Mr. Ashe and he might be able to

cross the Lake. They wished to leave Uganda, he said.

‘ Why do you want to leave ? ’ Mwanga asked.

‘ We have had nothing but trouble since we have been here,’ answered Mackay, and warming to his subject, he added, ‘ Our place is guarded, our friends interfered with, and though I am willing to help you, I am not your slave.’

‘ Oh yes,’ said the king, ‘ you have to chop my firewood, have you not ? You have to cook for me. You *are* my slave. What is it you wish ? ’

‘ We desire nothing but canoes that we may go.’

But it meant another visit before any progress was made. This time Mackay went alone, and told the king that he had made up his mind to go.

‘ I will never consent to that,’ the king said, and he promised him four milk cows if he would remain. Then he called him aside when none of the great lords was

present, and said, ' You shall stay with me and teach people religion.'

' Will you let Bwana Ashe go ? ' Mackay asked. After considerable hesitation the king consented.

Many of the Christians came to bid Mr. Ashe ' Good-bye.' But his saddest leave-taking was with Mackay. They had passed through trials and troubles together. Ashe could never forget those days, nor could he forget Mackay's sympathy and friendship and what they meant to him.

Mackay knew that Ashe would meet his father in Edinburgh, so he wrote home : ' Ashe is a genuine fellow, a most earnest Christian, and a missionary. He is my *alter ego* ; in receiving him, please think you are receiving *me*.' After he had gone, he wrote a short note to Dr. Robb :—

' On this occasion I am not going to give you a letter, only a hail across the sea, hoping that if it ever reaches you, you will send me a few lines just for the sake o' auld lang syne. . . .

‘ Here I am all alone so far as Englishmen, Scotchmen, or Irishmen are concerned. Mr. O’Flaherty left at Christmas ’85, and Mr. Ashe last August. Poor O’Flaherty died on the way home, in the Red Sea, two days from Suez. We have no more our old King Mtesa, and his successor, who has been now some two and a half years on the throne, has proved a cruel, suspicious youth, with all the vices of his father, and few of the virtues.

‘ You probably heard how he murdered our first Bishop, Dr. Hannington, and since then scores and scores of the native Christians. Our sorrows and heartbreaks have been many, but we look for the day when all the sorrow will be turned into joy.’

## XIV

### ALONE

MACKAY was alone in Uganda for eleven months. His position was a trying one. The Arabs hated him. As Mohammedans they saw in him an enemy of their religion ; they knew also of his strong opposition to the slave trade ; and how he had manufactured weaving and spinning apparatus, and was teaching the Baganda how to make cloth from fibre. That was going to tell against the success of their trade. They would gladly see him either killed or bundled out of the country.

But he went calmly on completing the Gospel of St. Matthew in Luganda, and felt overjoyed when at last he came to the end of it.

‘ Praise God,’ he wrote, ‘ St. Matthew’s Gospel



is now published complete in Luganda, and rapidly being bought. I merely stitch it with title-page, and a loose cover. Binding by and by.'

The Arabs' hatred of him got worse as time went on, and they never ceased trying to influence Mwanga, not only against him, but against all Europeans. The white man, they said, really wanted to make the country his ; especially was this the case with the Mission people. But Mwanga did not want to lose Mackay ; the Chief Judge, too, was unwilling that he should go—at least he said so. Mackay was perplexed over the matter. But what was most in his thoughts was the position of the Mission. The terrible tragedies of the past months haunted him night and day. How could a recurrence of such cruel deeds be averted ? If the Church would only awaken to the fact that the persecutions were a reality, there might be some chance of a solution of the difficulty.

He wrote in one of his letters at this time :—

‘There are grave considerations connected with mission work in such a country as this. Unquestionably our last desire would be to see steps taken to avenge the murder of either the Bishop or our native brethren. But we shall err greatly if we by sloth and indifference allow such precious seed to fall to the ground in vain. It seems to me that we are bound to take advantage of these dreadful events, to do our very utmost to prevent their like occurring again. . . . The command “Prepare ye the way of the Lord,” was given before that other, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.” If we are taught any lesson by the sad events which have of late occurred in East Africa, this certainly is one, that we cannot reverse the Divine order. We must condescend to clear the ground and level it, before we can plough and sow. Our Societies are perhaps often too eager to see *results* to allow duly for the necessary preliminaries of preparing the way. . . . What coach company would have believed a hundred years ago, that by to-day England would spend eight hundred millions in bringing low the hills, and filling up the valleys? But the wisdom of the step is demonstrated beyond all question by the success which has

followed. The wheels were set free to run straight on.

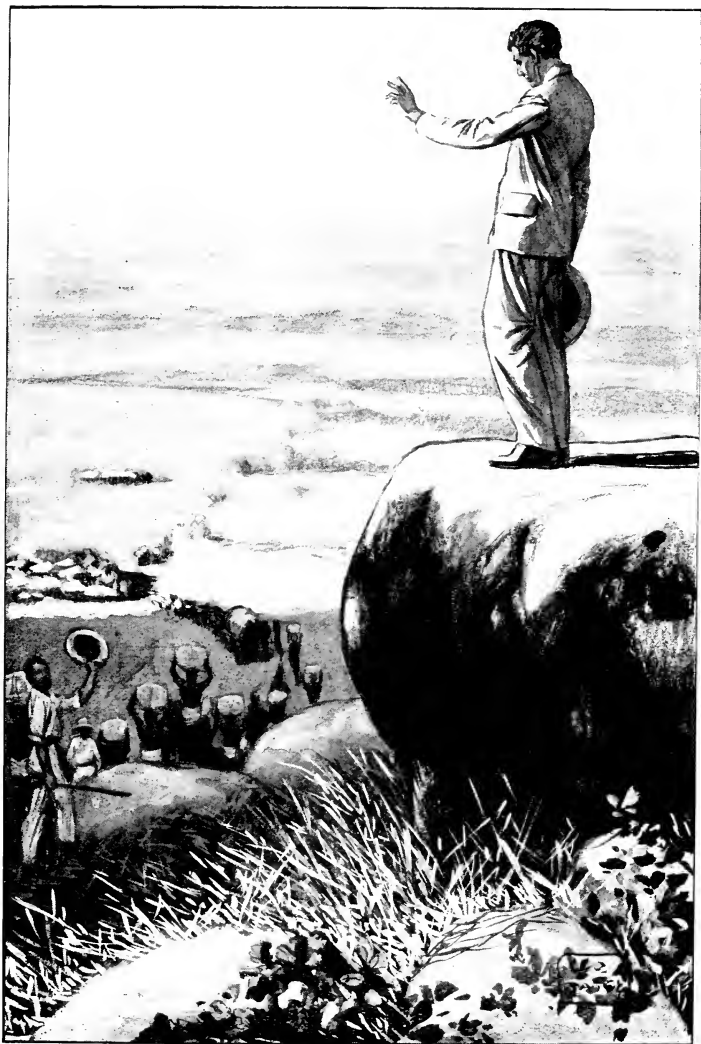
‘Possibly you will tell me that my analogy does not hold, for the Gospel itself has ever been regarded as the best preparer of its own way. But have not the many disasters which have befallen missionaries and their converts in more fields than this been in great part due to this very conception? . . . It was Krapf who said, “The survivors will pass over the slain in the trenches, and carry this African fortress for the Lord.” But I question very much if we are warranted in making a bridge of dead bodies, when it is possible to overcome the obstacle by other less costly, and therefore less romantic means.

‘In England peace and liberty have become so truly part of the nature of men that they cannot well imagine a state of things when they dare go to church only under pain of death, or be found with a book or piece of paper under pain of being roasted alive. If such penalties were inflicted on *one* individual, would there not be an outcry? But when a whole community is treated so—because at a distance—it is regarded as a matter of course. Such, at any rate, was the attitude in the case of the murder of the three Christian lads in January of last year—one of them a member of our own house-

hold. We owe a debt to these people, whom our teaching exposes to such dreadful torments. Vengeance is the Lord's, but prevention is ours. . . . As Dr. Duff used to put it, we must lay a mine which, when sprung, will blow to atoms the mountain of barbarism and cruel superstition which have prevailed hitherto. Thus we shall prepare the way.'

Mackay had white friends in Africa in whom he was interested, as well as black ones. There was Emin Pasha, Governor of the Equatorial Provinces. But for Mackay and his interest in Emin's case, there might have been another tragedy similar to that which happened at Khar-toum. Mackay succeeded in letting Europe know that Emin was with difficulty holding his own against the Dervishes of the Mahdi's empire. Emin had been a generous contributor to the Natural History Collection in the British Museum, so Mackay felt that it was England who ought to send a relief expedition.

Emin valued Mackay's sympathy. He had come to know him as a friend and



‘THAT LONELY FIGURE STANDING ON THE BROW OF THE  
HILL, WAVING FAREWELL’



adviser. Mr. Stanley was not always ready to make allowance for a certain morbid sensitiveness in Emin, probably aggravated by his experiences, and once or twice took it upon him to administer a rebuke. The Pasha apologised for having used hasty words, and when told he had been acting like a child said, 'Ah, Mr. Stanley, I am sorry I ever came on with you, and if you will allow me, on reaching Mr. Mackay's, I will ask you to let me remain with him.'

True to Mr. Ashe's estimate of Mackay, he never ceased to be a missionary. He presented Emin with a copy of the Revised Version of the Bible, and also Drummond's *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*. Emin refers to Mackay's kindness in several of his letters. 'When I have been extremely cast down,' he says, 'his letters have aided and upheld me, and given me fresh courage for new work. He has divided what he had with me, and robbed himself to overload me with presents. May God who

protects us all richly reward him ; it is perfectly out of my power to thank him sufficiently.'

Mackay decided at last to withdraw from Uganda. ' If they are really sorry that I am going, they will be all the more likely to agree to another minister coming on with the boat, while I settle at the other end of the Lake.' He had, in fact, resolved not to go unless Mwanga was willing to send a messenger with him who would fetch the Rev. E. C. Gordon to take his place.

After long discussions, they said they wanted the missionary called ' Gordon.' The name had a good sound.

Gifts were exchanged between Mackay and the chiefs, and the king sent a present with a message to ' come back soon.'

On 21st July 1887 he locked up the Mission premises, and left the keys with the Frenchmen. He crossed the Lake in the *Mirembe*, and met Mr. Gordon, who left by the same boat for Uganda on the 10th of August.



## XV

### SERIOUS WORK AND HAPPY MEMORIES

MACKAY writes home to his family from Usambiro, at the south end of Victoria Nyanza, on 30th December 1887 :—

‘ On 21st July of this year, by the infinite grace of our Lord Jesus, I was permitted to leave Uganda. Possibly I shall soon have to go back there again, but meanwhile I have much to do here ; and when that is done, if I am granted strength to do it, I should fondly hope to come to see you all before crossing the Lake again. But that is yet, I fear, a long way ahead, and He who has so well disposed of all our concerns hitherto will lead us also in the future as He sees to be best for each of us.

. . . . .  
‘ Ashe and Walker arrived here safely some three weeks ago. The Bishop and Blackburn also came back from Magu, while Hooper came on from Uyui, so there are six of us altogether. We are holding a many days’ conference so as to settle important questions connected with

the working of the Mission. We have a prayer meeting every morning, and the conference afterwards.

‘Gordon is still in Uganda. My latest from him is dated Nov. 16. At that date all was fairly quiet, and some increased liberty granted to our people to worship. May it long continue. . . .’

On the same date he wrote to his friend, Dr. Robb, for the last time :—

‘My eyes could scarcely believe themselves when a month ago your more than welcome letter of 21st Aug. was to hand. My delight is great to find that you are in the body—and well, only once again *promoted*. When are you to stop climbing the hill of fame ?

‘By the above address you will see that I am now really out of Buganda. The English papers ante-dated my leaving that dreadful country by some months. Possibly I shall soon be back there again, but I should like to take a run home first, and great will be my grief if I do not meet you somewhere. If I go before 1889, I would really like going via Ahmedabad. You used to have some *fair* cigars (I do not remember them enough to call them either excellent or execrable ! One

name or the other would have stuck to my recollection).

‘ Here we are gathered—six of us—one being our Bishop (Parker), also an Indian, for many years at Calcutta, and later among the Gonds. But we shall not long be six. Two are going in a day or two to open a new station near Magu on Speke Gulf. Two more are destined for Buganda as soon as we can come to terms with that foolish Mwanga. The Bishop will by and by leave for the coast, and your humble servant will be once more alone.

‘ Our staff is still more small than great, and our Bishop recently complained that he had been called from his work in India to come to E. Africa to superintend a handful of sick missionaries weekly diminishing in number ! It is only too true that far too many have been off work, especially of late. That being so, I do not care to run away, especially as I cannot just yet find a reasonable excuse for doing so. Besides, it is little rest that a poor missionary gets when he goes to England. Ashe has just come back, having been only seven months in England, and all that time occupied in addresses and sermons, so that it is more of a holiday for him to come back to Africa again.

‘ At this moment imagination carries me back to your hospital house in Zanzibar—now in

strange hands. When shall I see Mrs. Robb again, and the children? Even the Consulate is in new hands. I believe we are to have a good man in Col. Euan Smith, whom Bp. Parker knew in India. The Consul, Capt. Macdonald, seems also to be a friend to us. He has written a very kind letter to Mr. Ashe this last mail.

‘East Africa is pushing ahead, and in some senses as stagnant as ever, if not going backwards. Emin still holds out at Wadei, waiting for Stanley, of whom we have no news yet. . . .

‘Very kindest regards to Mrs. Robb when you write to her, and to all Aberdeen.

‘A guid New Year to you and mony mair.’

## XVI

### PLOTS AND COUNTERPLOTS

ALTHOUGH Mackay could never feel so much at home in Usambiro as he did in Uganda, it was a great delight to have friends near him, especially one like Ashe. He knew what it meant to be lonely. He knew the meaning of *isolation*.

‘What sadness and melancholy comes over me at times, and I find myself shedding tears like a child.’ He wrote that when he was alone in Uganda; but he never allowed himself to give way to sentiment. He was but an individual; what of the loneliness of Uganda—of the great continent of Africa? He had set his heart on what he believed would be a remedy for it.

‘There can be no question,’ he wrote, ‘but that all history shows plainly that

among races of men isolation produces degeneration, while intercourse with other nations tends to elevation. Were this interior brought more into contact with the outside world, the horrid deeds of cruelty would hide their heads in shame. Even Christianity, when isolated, has generally become either corrupt or extinct. . . . All Africa is a standing testimony to the destructive power of isolation. One of the most powerful factors that will in future elevate the African will be communication. The strength of the power of evil in this interior lies in its inaccessibility from without. I must therefore hope that you will be able to get some good company of Christian merchants to put their heads together, and follow up your scheme (railway) from Mombasa to Speke Gulf.'

Usambiro was unhealthy, and several of the party suffered from fever. In the month of March Mr. Blackburn died, and exactly fourteen days after, the Bishop

himself. Mackay was the only one who could speak a language the natives could understand, so he, by request of his clerical brethren, read the burial service on both occasions. 'We have laid them side by side under a tree in the jungle close by,' he wrote, 'piling a heap of stones over each grave, and planting an euphorbia fence round the plot of ground.'

Mr. Ashe began to feel ill, and did not improve as time went on. In the end of July he left for the coast, and Mackay was once more alone. He set about building a new boat, and in a fortnight had made some ten thousand bricks to build a house in which to construct the vessel. All the time a series of tribal wars was going on; the whole neighbourhood seemed to be in arms, and the Mission property was constantly in danger of being looted; that, however, did not prevent him from going on with a translation of St. John's Gospel. He was finding it much more difficult than St. Matthew.

But the news of a rebellion in Uganda arrested his attention. There had been a spell of intermittent persecution, then suddenly the fiend in Mwanga broke loose, and he decided on a plot to exterminate both Christians and Mohammedans. They had united their protests against the soul-and-body-destroying debauchery of Mwanga's court, and he determined to get rid of both parties. He assembled the whole body of them together on some pretence, and planned to take them to an island in the Lake and there leave them to starve.

The plot was discovered, and Mwanga's would-be victims marched on the capital. Mwanga fled, and escaped in canoes with thirty boys and six women. He managed to reach the Arab settlement of Magu, on the Speke Gulf. There he wrote a letter to Mackay, imploring him to come and take him away from the Arabs, who were 'fleecing him.'

Meanwhile Mwanga's brother, Kiwewa



was made king, and the Christians, being the more powerful body, were given the greater number of offices. The Mohammedans became jealous, and treacherously murdered many of the Christian chiefs. The Christians fled, and the Arabs became masters of the situation. They tried to make Kiwewa conform to their creed, but rather than submit to their rites he killed two Mohammedans with his own hand, then lost courage and fled. Kalema, another brother, was then placed on the throne as a Mohammedan king. Kiwewa was put to death, and the Christians were expelled from the country.

Meanwhile, Mwanga, who had been practically a prisoner in the hands of an Arab in the district of Magu, escaped to the French mission-station at the south end of the Lake, where he was baptized.

A number of the Christians who escaped reached Usambiro, and sought shelter

with Mackay. He received them with kindness, but made them work for their food and clothes. But what of Gordon and Walker? Mackay was on his way to the French Mission to make inquiries, when he sighted the *Mirembe* coming. The two missionaries were in it, and in a terrible plight. They had, to use their own words, 'been taken by the scruff of the neck and bundled out, but without their bundles.' They had only a blanket each to cover them. Mackay well knew the misery of it.

Another letter came from Mwanga, begging Mackay to help him. 'Do not remember bygone matters. . . . Formerly I did not know God, but now I know the religion of Jesus Christ. . . . Mr. Mackay, do help me. . . . If you find me becoming bad, then you may drive me from my throne.'

By and by, after many humiliations, Mwanga was carried shoulder high from the Lake to his capital, and made king

once more, only he was no longer the despotic monarch — the murderer of Christians—he used to be. He was a mere instrument in the hands of his Christian court.

Mackay 'pegged' on, building both a steam launch and a wagon, and at times sitting down to translate the Gospel of St. John. Mr. Gordon helped with the teaching of the boys, of whom there were a goodly number. But a great reaction in favour of Christian missions had taken place in Uganda, and Mackay thought it was right that Gordon and Walker should return there. One morning he sent them away with his blessing. 'I have great hope of them,' he wrote to Ashe; 'they are good men and true, we may be proud of them as our successors.'

A few hours after they had gone, word came to the Mission that Mr. Stanley and his party were near at hand. A messenger was sent after the two to bring them back, but he failed to catch them up.

Stanley thus describes the Mission settlement at Usambiro :—

‘The aspect was cheerless and melancholy, grass all dead, trees either shrunk, withered, or dead, at least there was not the promise of a bud anywhere, which was of course due to the dryness of the season.’

Of Mackay himself he writes :—

‘A clever writer lately wrote a book about a man who spent much time in Africa which from beginning to end is a long-drawn wail. It would have cured both writer and hero of all moping to have seen the manner of Mackay’s life. He has no time to fret and groan and weep, and God knows if ever man had reason to think of “graves and worms and oblivion,” and to be doleful and lonely and sad, Mackay had, when, after murdering his Bishop, and burning his pupils, and strangling his converts, and clubbing to death his dark friends, Mwanga turned his eye of death on him. And yet the little man met it with calm blue eyes that never winked. To see one man of this kind, working day after day for fourteen years bravely, and without a syllable of complaint or a moan amid the “wildernesses,” and to hear him lead his little flock to show forth God’s loving kindness in the morning and His faithfulness every night,

is worth going a long journey, for the moral courage and contentment that one derives from it.'

The party stayed at the mission-station from the 28th of August to the morning of the 17th of September.

Mackay enjoyed Stanley's visit. 'I could use no ceremony with them,' he wrote, 'and simply gave them good plain food, "family broth," and plenty of it.'

Both Stanley and his officers urged Mackay to return with them; the C.M.S. had invited him time after time; his friends urged him to come home to recruit. He would not quit his post till reinforcements arrived.

He wrote to the Editorial Secretary of the C.M.S. :—

'But what is this you write: "Come home"? Surely now in our terrible dearth of workers, it is not the time for any one to desert his post. Send me only our *first* twenty men, and I may be tempted to come and *help* you to find the second twenty.'

He went back to his work at the forge and the lathe, to his teaching and the translation of St. John's Gospel. Mr. Deekes had, by request, come from Magu to be with him as colleague ; Mackay feared there was danger to the missionaries from the Arabs there.

Mr. Deekes was preparing to go home to England, and the morning of his departure (3rd February 1890) arrived.

' Where is Mackay ? Where is Mackay ? ' he kept calling. He entered Mackay's room to find him in the hot stage of fever. Some of his boys were with him. Mr. Deekes sent away the men he had engaged to carry his loads, and decided to wait. Next day Mackay became delirious, and continued so for four days ; on the 8th of February he passed away.



Grave of  
**ALEXANDER MACKAY**  
Pioneer Missionary Africa





## XVII

### A HAUNTING FIGURE

SAM JONES, the Georgian preacher, says,  
‘God entrusts all the notable causes on  
this earth to men who are game.’ Mackay  
never would acknowledge himself beaten,  
and his *passing* was the passing of a  
conqueror. He feared the face of no man.  
He would meet death as he met life—with  
a hope that never grew dim.

‘I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,

The best and the last !

I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and  
forbore,

And bade me creep past.

No ! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers

The heroes of old,

Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life’s arrears

Of pain, darkness and cold.

For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,

The black minute ’s at end,

And the elements’ rage, the fiend-voices that rave,

Shall dwindle, shall blend,

Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,  
Then a light, then thy breast,  
O thou soul of my soul ! I shall clasp thee again,  
And with God be the rest.'

Of Mackay's work, let Mr. Ashe, his *alter ego*, speak :—

' Alexander Mackay was one of those few who looked fearlessly forth, and seemed to see the face of the living God. He never despaired of any person or anything. Quiet he was, and strong, and patient, and resolute, and brave ; one on whom you might depend. He endured fourteen years of Africa . . . fourteen years of the contradiction of men, black and white ; fourteen years of dangers, fevers, sorrows, disappointments—and in all, and through all, he was steadfast, unmovable ; a true missionary, always abounding in the work of the Lord.'

One of Stanley's officers, Mr. A. J. Mounteney Jephson, gives, in a letter to Mackay's father, a glimpse of the man whom Stanley called ' the best missionary since Livingstone ' :—

‘Three days ago I received a letter from Africa and the tears came into my eyes when, turning it over, I read your son’s signature at the end. It had been written only three weeks before his death. . . . We arrived at his Mission at Usambiro broken down in body and mind, tired and wearied from the constant strain of those hard months, and prostrated and beaten down by fever. He received us and gave us the sincerest welcome it is possible for a man to give. He seemed to understand all that we wanted, and with the utmost delicacy gave us exactly what most we needed. His kindness, his goodness, his cleverness, his gentle sincerity, and kindly cheerful ways endeared him to us all. . . . I shall never forget the morning we left Usambiro. He walked part of the way with us, and wished us good-bye; and one’s whole heart went out to him when he took my hand and wished me God-speed. That lonely figure standing on the brow of the hill, waving farewell to us, will ever remain vividly in my mind.

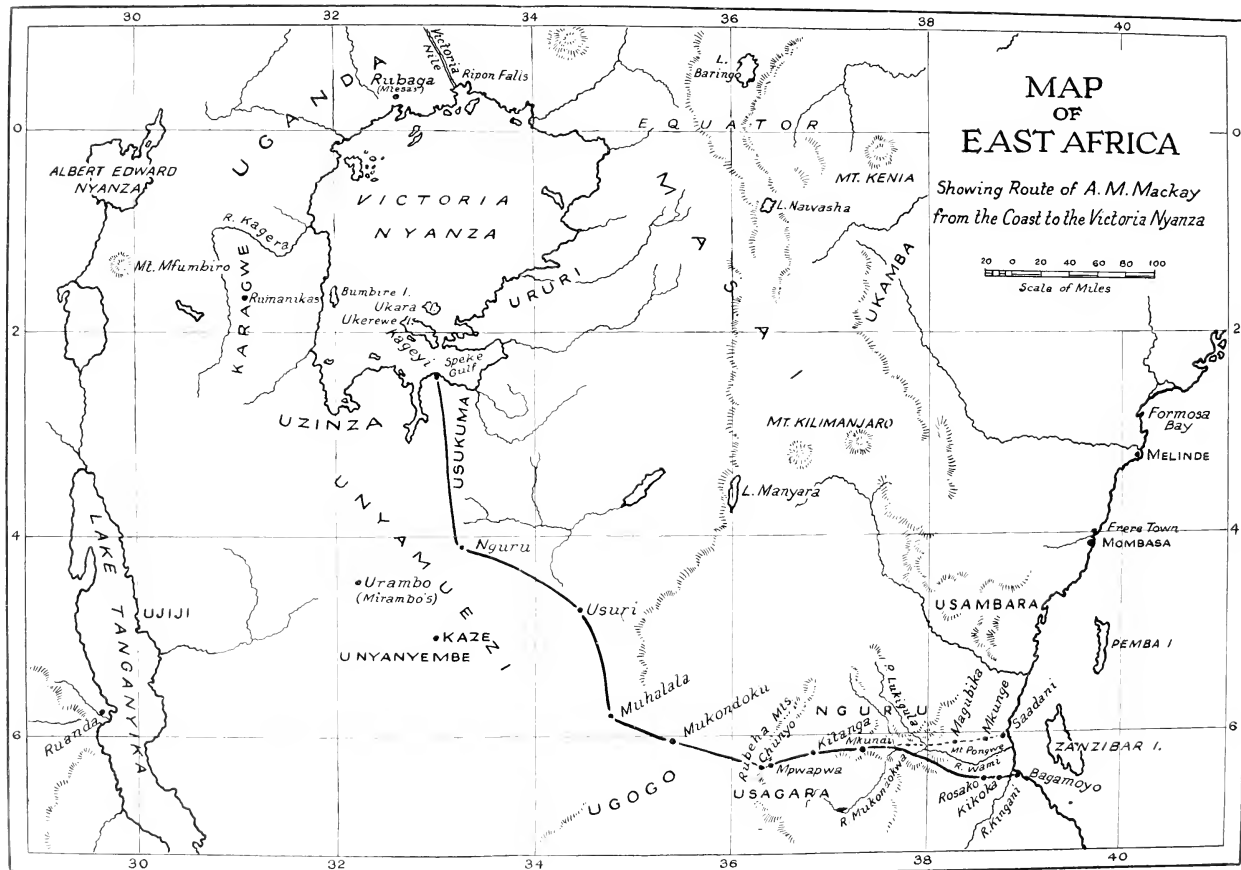
. . . . .  
‘Africa is such a hard mistress to serve, so pitiless to her servants. Your son’s name is now, alas! added to that long list of devoted men who have lost their lives by fearlessly doing their duty. His death, too, will cause a feeling

of dismay to his African friends, by whom he was so trusted and beloved; for many days before we reached his Mission we heard from the natives of Mackay, nothing but Mackay—they seemed to care for, and know of no one else.

‘ I feel that all I am writing is such a wretched failure in expressing the almost sacred feeling I have about your son and his work.’

A message was received from Mackay by the C.M.S. ten days after news came of his death. One sentence in it was: ‘ Mwanga writes, “ I want a host of English teachers to come and preach to my people.” Our Church members urge me to write imploring you to strengthen our Mission, not by two or three, but by twenty. Is this golden opportunity to be lost for ever?’

There is something strangely haunting about ‘ That lonely figure standing on the brow of the hill, waving farewell.’











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